

# KICK IT OVER<sup>®</sup>

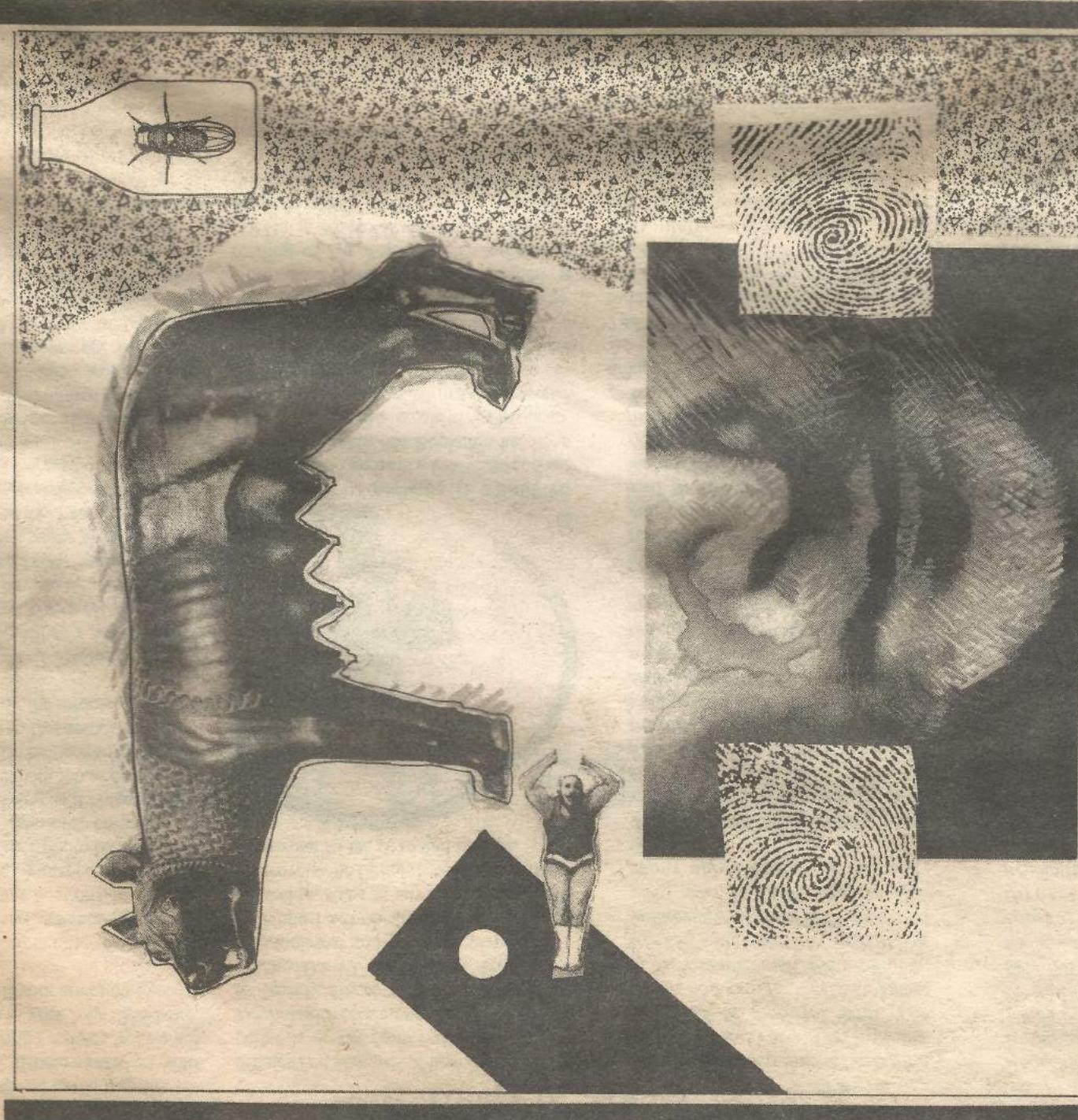


TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT OF THE FLIGHT - BEFORE YOU KNOW IT - I'LL BE OVER THE WATER LIKE A SWALLOW.

Reconsidering Spirituality  
Spraypainting Poland  
Ecology's Cold War  
  
Anarchist Unconvention  
Regreening Turtle Island  
US Serial Murder Cover-up

No. 22 FALL 1988

The front and back cover was designed by Catherine Tammaro. Tammaro is a Toronto-based artist who does graven images. Song lyrics excerpted from "The Night of the Swallow" by Kate Bush from the album *The Dreaming*.



LIKE A SWALLOW FLYING TO MALTA, THE NIGHT DOESN'T LIKE IT - LOOKS JUST LIKE YOUR FACE ON THE MOON.

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## Guatemala: The doing and the undoing

by Amy Trussell

A weaving hangs in my kitchen  
with the yellow of unbearable heat  
flat and constrained  
are its hummingbirds and poinsettias  
as a woman must flatten herself  
against the shadows when helicopters  
beat like hell birds over Guatemala

A section of the cloth  
is unwoven for several inches near the top  
perhaps the most beautiful part  
it is the strands of possibility  
combed hair  
the eye travels upward in expectation

But why did she stop weaving there  
to plant some corn by moonlight  
only to have it burned by the army  
to nurse her baby  
her bowed head wrapped intricately  
in traditional woven strips  
living art  
she is all this doing and undoing  
and doing again



by Carmen Lind Pettersen

There's something hanging in my kitchen  
and I don't know if the person who made it  
is dead or alive  
this material is the only window I have to go by  
Mayan sister  
you have everything you own strapped on  
to your body  
and I can only hope you are walking  
the ability to secure your loom to another tree  
picking up the threads again

With the backstrap loom the weaver is part  
of the loom  
I look around my kitchen  
nothing much to attach myself to  
I am "an American" and I float  
like an astronaut from room to room  
over smooth linoleum  
you travel by night  
your back is your shelf  
your bones are your car

The alternative political movements of the 1980s were profoundly shaped in reaction against "old-style" radical politics. Quite rightly, they rejected the central-committee authoritarianism and the rigid ideological party lines of Marxism. But now the Green movement is confronted with the possibility of a new kind of authoritarianism and a new kind of party line: the authority of religion, and the party line of religious orthodoxy.

In alternative political movements, spirituality developed out of a realistic understanding that changes in consciousness were necessary for social transformation; otherwise a revolution would simply perpetuate the sexist, racist, homophobic, and other hierarchies of the old, rotten society. To many, spirituality seemed an appropriate way to cultivate a peaceful, nonhierarchical consciousness. Some found participation in alternative religious rituals to be a personal support for their political work. "Women's spirituality...replenishes and sustains us in our struggle," Charlene Spretnak wrote several years ago, and there is no argument with this observation.

But since then, spirituality has been catapulted out of the personal and into the political. The second part of Spretnak's sentence ran, "More than being just a tool to aid us while we fight for a better life, it is a key to the better life"<sup>1</sup> -- and this marks the point at which spirituality becomes a problem in political movements. For as the "key to a better life," providing for members' spiritual needs gets incorporated into the core of the political agenda and practice.

It is as if a group of people were to maintain that because people have great personal needs for love and sex, the satisfaction of which supports their political activities, the Green movement should provide Greens with love and sex as a "key to a better life." In that case the Green movement would stop being a political movement and could come to resemble a dating service. Or if another group maintained that because therapy supported their political work, therapy is the "key to a better life" and should therefore be at the center of the Green vision. The Green movement then would no longer be politics but a counseling service.

By the same token, when a political organization ministers inordinately to its members' spiritual needs, it runs the risk of becoming a religious congregation and diluting its political orientation. Spirituality, like love, sex and psychotherapy, is largely a matter of personal concern. A political movement, while it should certainly be concerned with the psychological well-being of its supporters, does not exist primarily to minister to their personal needs. Rather, its members voluntarily agree to work in behalf of a larger political ideal.

But this is changing today. With the view that religion is the "key to a better life," the Green movement is now being asked to seek a "sustainable religion" (in Spretnak's phrase) as part of its agenda, while those who are not spiritual are generously assured that "a Green culture would allow plenty of space" for them.<sup>2</sup>

Who, one may reasonably ask, is doing the "allowing"? Why must political activists be "allowed" their space in an ostensibly political movement? Is the

"key to a better life" becoming a new dogma, perhaps even as disquieting as the one we abandoned?

#### The Goddess Version of History

In its deceptively antihierarchical credo ("The Goddess...is not an authority figure; She is, among other things, a sym-

bol of harmony and oneness among humans, animals, and nature"<sup>3</sup>), goddess worship's "key to a better life" is a dubious version of prehistory. In this version, Neolithic societies were egalitarian, peaceful, matrilineal -- and worshiped a nature goddess.

Now, there is every reason to believe that early societies were egalitarian, organic, and peaceful, and were probably matrilineal, based on archaeology and evolutionary anthropology. But goddess promoters maintain that these social arrangements went hand in hand with reverence for a Great Goddess and perhaps were even caused by goddess worship. The heavy assumption is that the peacefulness and equality could be recovered if we once again revered the earth as a goddess. Using almost exclusively mythological evidence -- which is shaky at best -- such fantasies are running amok in the idyllic glades of present-day goddess worship.

Minoan Crete, for example, is supposed to epitomize a sensuous, free, peaceful, gender-equal, nature-loving paradise, complete with a queen (a monarch, but never mind), priestesses (hierarchical, but never mind) and goddesses (supernatural, but never mind). "Clearly the goddess was supreme," trumpets Merlin Stone in her famous book on goddess religion.<sup>4</sup> Archaeological support for these Minoan fantasies, however, is highly precarious. Sir Arthur Evans, the excavator of the palace of Knossos on whose work these fantasies are largely built, almost arbitrarily chose a certain room in the palace as "the Queen's Megaron" -- although as Sarah Pomeroy dryly observes, "This room was not found with a label on it."<sup>5</sup> Evans's reason for this dubious judgment? A certain seat -- presumably a throne -- in the room was found to be somewhat lower and wider than others. For the Victorian Evans (who regarded women as an obstruction on his excavation), this was sufficient evidence to show that the seat was a woman's. His label for the room as "the Queen's Megaron" has ever since been published and republished with no indication that this attribution was without archaeological foundation.

In addition, the famous "Snake Goddess" of Crete -- supposedly an incarnation of the great goddess -- was in Evans's own word, "reconstituted." The torso, right arm, and skirt bottom may have been arbitrarily reassembled; the head was entirely new; and the crown was a circlet that possibly came from a lion's head. Evans gave no reason why he considered this a figure of a goddess rather than a mere attendant or an ordinary woman.

There is also no reason to suppose that the goddess -- if she existed at all -- was a nature goddess. There simply was no concept of nature per se in prehistory for a goddess to be identified

with, let alone one that could teach people "a sophisticated understanding of our interrelatedness with Nature and her cycles."<sup>6</sup> The realms of nature and humanity were not distinguished until Hellenic times. Nor was the alleged goddess an earth goddess, even in the mythological evidence upon which goddess-promoters rely; she was rather a

as religious and gender ones. Both the Chinese and the Aztecs developed patriarchy, centralized states, warfare, and male deities with no help at all from "Indo-European" invaders.<sup>9</sup>

#### Goddesses and Gender Relations

Nor does any one-to-one correspondence between goddess worship and egalitarian social relations hold up under scrutiny. Much as we would like to accept Starhawk's view that "the independent spirit of

Witchcraft is very much akin to many of the ideals of the 'Founding Fathers', for example, freedom of speech and worship, decentralized government, and the rights of the individual rather than the divine right of kings,"<sup>10</sup> the fact is that goddess worship has historically been used by rulers to try to legitimate political tyranny rather than by those who wished to corrode it. To cite just one example: for two millennia in Mesopotamia, monarchs attributed the legitimacy of their rule to the favor of goddesses, from Ninhursag to Ishtar; the Assyrian ruler Assurnasirpal even said he based his rule on Ishtar's favor although he was already the son of a king.

Nor is goddess worship free of hierarchy in its own right. Priestesses abound, even according to the literature of the goddess promoters, as far back as the Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras, to Catal Huyuk, and to predynastic Egypt. In historic times both the Egyptian Isis and the Hittite Sun Goddess of Arinna were known as "the Throne." Priestesses were common throughout the ancient Near East; indeed the Aramaean goddess Atargatis was worshiped at a Syrian city called Hierapolis.<sup>11</sup>

The issue of the relationship of goddess worship to social and political hierarchies raises a larger question about the relation of myth to social and political realities in general. Does myth shape social reality? Many in the ecology and ecofeminist movements seem to think it does. Lynn White's famous article traced the causes of ecodisaster to the Christian religion. For feminist Carol P. Christ, "religious symbols shape a cultural ethos, defining the deepest values of a society and the persons in it." For her, the sex of the deity worshiped by a culture seems to directly affect gender relations in that culture. "Religions centered on the worship of a male God...legitimate the political and social authority of fathers and sons in the institutions of society."<sup>12</sup>



All of this is the rankest historical idealism, which it took Western societies centuries to overcome. One would never know that Jules Michelet, Karl Marx, or even Emile Durkheim had ever tried to ground human consciousness in social realities. Nor is it surprising to find that the facts do not support Christ's thesis. The anthropological record reveals no pattern of correspondence between goddess worship and high social and political status for woman. In fact, in many cases goddess worship corresponds more properly to low status for women. Under these circumstances, it is hard to imagine how goddess worship could be empowering for women, as goddess-promoters claim it is. Given its mythic origins, it is hard to imagine why women would even want to base their self-esteem on a supernatural fiction.

Again, a few examples are revealing. The religion of Burma, Theravada Buddhism, has no goddess at all. Yet Burmese women somehow manage to be among the world's most liberated; "they hold a power that is awesome to behold," with social, legal, and political freedoms that at least equal those of men, observe John Ferguson and Mi Mi Khiang.<sup>13</sup> Chinese Buddhism, by contrast, does have a female deity; in fact, Kwan Yin is the most worshiped and most depicted deity in Chinese Buddhism. Yet her worship has not helped Chinese women one iota. China is the epitome of a patriarchal society. Nor has intense worship of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the great revered mother goddess and Mexican national symbol, done much for Mexican women. That culture is extremely macho, and in Mexican families, the father is absolutely supreme and the mother absolutely self-sacrificing.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, feminist anthropologist Peggy Sanday studied twelve peoples and actually found a high correlation between goddess worship and low status for women: "There is no correlation between the percentage of female deities and female status," she concluded.<sup>15</sup> Rather, she found, high status for women is much more related to their political participation and the existence of their solidarity groups and alliances than to goddess worship. In any case, whether the sex of a deity makes for hierarchy or not, the actual worship of a deity of either sex almost always means a religious hierarchy.

In fact, the sex of the deity a culture worships appears to have very little to do with the gender relations in the culture itself. A veritable flood of scholars have warned against seeking one-to-one correspondences between a culture's myths and its social and political realities. According to Marina Warner, "There is no logical equivalence in any society be-

tween exalted female objects of worship and a high position for woman." Writes distinguished anthropologist Ernestine Friedl, "Although it might be expected that the sex of the ritual leaders would be related to the sex of the gods,...this is not the case." Anthropologist Ena Campbell notes that "[m]other goddess worship seems to stand in inverse relationship with high secular female status." Eminent feminist classical scholar Sarah Pomeroy writes, "To use the mother goddess theory to draw any conclusions regarding the high status of human females of the time [prehistory] would be foolhardy...[T]he mother may be worshiped in



societies where male dominance and even misogyny are rampant."<sup>16</sup>

#### Myth and Reality

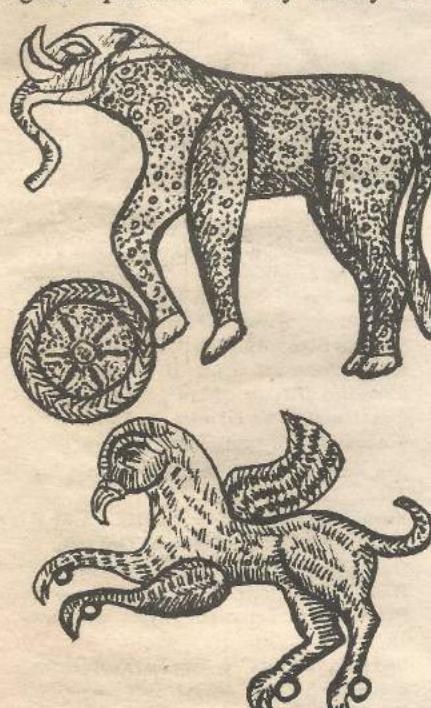
Actually, the relationship of myth to reality is never simple, least of all on an issue as emotionally charged as relations between the sexes. According to feminist anthropologists Sherry Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, "The field of gender studies has been plagued with the so-called 'myth and reality' problem -- the problem that cultural gender notions rarely accurately reflect male-female relations, men's and women's activities and men's and women's contributions in any given society."<sup>17</sup> Even the assumption that women would worship a female deity and men a male deity is not beyond challenge.<sup>18</sup> Least of all can we say that if we begin worshiping a goddess, women's situation will improve.

Yet many in the ecology and ecofeminist movements seem to think that merely changing our myths from "bad" ones to "good" ones will change our social realities. Starhawk, an otherwise astute political thinker, explicitly is trying to create a politics of myth-changing to this end: "True social change can only come about when the myths and symbols of our culture are themselves changed." According to Carol P. Christ, "Symbol systems cannot simply be rejected, they must be replaced."<sup>19</sup>

Charlene Spretnak seems to take this notion to its extreme. A veritable religious determinist, in her version of history religion is the primary factor shaping social reality. Spretnak identifies "the largest mobilized force trying to defeat us" as "patriarchal religion" -- not capitalism, not the nation state. Similarly, what will liberate us is a religious change, for Spretnak; social change apparently comes about automatically from religious change. "We could urge that ecological wisdom regarding God's creation be incorporated in Sunday school as well as in sermons and prayer," she writes. She even advocates integrating women into existing religious hierarchies as a way of furthering "the Green principle of postpatriarchal consciousness." Indeed, so fervently messianic is

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## Kick It Over November 1988 No. 22 (7th anniversary issue)

*Yes, we have a US address, No, you cannot use it!*

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See you-all in the new year -- Karl Amdur

Spretnak's vision that religious reform -- of mainstream religion! -- seems her primary concern, for which Green politics is a mere vehicle. Her book *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* could more appropriately be titled, *The Green Dimension of Ecclesiastical Reform*.<sup>20</sup>

Quite simply, the ecological disaster does not arise from strictly religious causes; nor will a transformation of myths end it. Reality is not determined by myths, and capitalism and the nation-state do not obey the homilies of Sunday school teachers.

Not only do goddess-promoters see a spurious correspondence between myth and reality; they also seem to confuse myth and reality, illusion and the existential world, and even supernature and nature. Like the Hollywood Dream Machine itself, devoted to blurring illusion and reality, the goddess-promoters seem to be devoted to blurring the distinction between nature and supernature. "The goddess is immanent in nature, not separate from it," we are often told, a statement that reveals not only this blurring but also a basic disrespect for natural processes.

The politics of myth is based on an

unknowable, the future that a specific myth holds out for political life is arbitrary -- a wild card.

Sorel believed that the primary consideration for the use of myths in politics is not their content, or their truth or falsity, but their effectiveness or ineffectiveness -- that is, their aliveness or deadness, whether they "resonate," in current argot. The actual content of a myth is therefore not only unknowable, it is ultimately irrelevant. It is ultimately irrelevant whether a certain myth is about a male deity or a female deity, about hierarchy or nonhierarchy. What matters is the very fact that a myth -- a sheer fiction -- is being used for political purposes at all.

The politics of myth facilitates manipulation -- which is perhaps why Mussolini liked to read Sorel. At a time when people are increasingly attempting to meet their personal needs in political movements, they are extremely vulnerable to manipulation. At a time when community and intimacy are increasingly difficult to find and sustain but are objects of overwhelming longing, it is extremely dangerous to hold out to people a nonhierarchical, communitarian myth of a loving mother

sumption of images, is the dominant activity. It is a consumerist "society of the spectacle," obsessed with appearances, in which all myths are essentially "pseudo-events" in Daniel Boorstin's phrase. In this context, the goddess is just another image, marketed and packaged for a consumer society. No wonder an air of artificiality pervades goddess-worship.

But goddess worship is more pernicious than most images because it threatens to turn ecological politics into symbolic, easily digestible pabulum for popular consumption. It is no accident that books on the goddess tend to be written at a sixth-grade level. Ecological politics becomes a consumer item, commodified by the goddess myth. Goddess worship merges alternative politics with the society of the spectacle, making alternative politics potentially as cheap and manipulative as mainstream politics.

Especially in our present society -- a society glutted with myths and tinsel images -- we must seriously question the use of myth in alternative political movements. Myth cannot fight myth. Ruling classes have always encouraged confusions between illusion and reality in underclasses. The fact is that whether a goddess was worshiped in prehistory or not, she was an illusion then, and she is an illusion now. In an age of manipulation and the tyranny of myth, it is rejecting all deities that is our redemption, not believing in them.

We must restore to the ecology movement a realistic -- not illusory -- view of nature, and a political -- not a religious -- view of politics. We must not ask our political movement to simply serve our emotional and sensuous needs, important as these may be, for the price may

Spirituality." In *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (Anchor/Doubleday, 1982), p. 398.

2. Charlene Spretnak, *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* (Bear and Co., 1986), p. 48.

3. Spretnak, "Politics," p. 561.

4. Merlin Stone, "The Great Goddess: Who Was She?" in Spretnak, *Politics of Women's Spirituality*, p. 20.

5. See Pomeroy's thorough debunking of the "archaeological" evidence for the Minoan goddess fantasy in "Selected Bibliography on Women in Classical Antiquity", in J. Peradotto and J.P. Sullivan, eds., *Women in the Ancient World: The Arethusa Papers*, Albany: SUNY, 1984, pp. 347-54.

6. Spretnak, *Spiritual Dimension*, p. 33, note.

7. Merlin Stone, *When God Was a Woman* (New York: Harvest/HBJ, 1976), p. 2.

8. Spretnak, *Spiritual Dimension*, pp. 32-33; *The Nation*, "Letters" section, April 2, 1988, p. 476; introduction to *Politics of Women's Spirituality*, p. xiv.

9. For a searching account of the rise of hierarchy, see Murray Bookchin's *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982).

10. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 7.

11. Stone, *When God Was a Woman*, pp. 38, 130; James Mellaart, *Catal Huyuk: A Neolithic Town in Anatolia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 202.

12. Lynn White, Jr., "The Historic Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155 (March 10, 1967): pp. 1203-1207; Carol P. Christ, "What the Goddess Means to Women", in Spretnak, ed., *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*.

13. John P. Ferguson, "The Great Goddess Today in Burma and Thailand: An Exploration of Her Symbolic Relevance to Monastic and Female Roles." In J.P. Preston, ed. *Mother Worship: Themes and Variations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), p. 295. See also Mi Mi Kiang, *The World of Burmese Women* (Totowa, N.J.: Zed Press, 1986).

14. See Ena Campbell, "The Virgin of Guadalupe and the Female Self-Image: A Mexican Case History," in Preston, ed., *Mother Worship*.

15. Peggy R. Sanday, "Female Status in the Public Domain." In M.Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, eds. *Women, Culture and Society* (Stanford University Press, 1974). The tribes she studied, in order from high female status to low, were: Yoruban, Iroquois, Samoan, Crow, Aymara, Tapirape, Kwala, Andamans, Tikopia, Azande, Somali, and Toda.



appeal to our intuitions and emotions, to the mythopoetic sensibility. These aspects of ourselves are incapable of distinguishing between symbol and symbolized, between dream and reality, between appearance and the authentic world -- both natural and social. To the mythopoetic sensibility, write H. and H.A. Frankfort, "whatever is capable of affecting mind, feeling, or will has thereby established its undoubted reality. There is, for instance, no reason why dreams should be considered less real than impressions received while one is awake."<sup>21</sup>

This inability to make the necessary distinction between the mythic and the real makes myth potentially very dangerous in political life, either as an organizing tool or as a "key to a better life." According to political theorist Georges Sorel (a favorite bedtime author for Mussolini), the content of myth is not subject to rational discussion (unlike utopias, in which possibilities for the future are logically drawn out of present conditions and are discussable) because myths do not come from rationality. Since they are nondiscursive, their contents cannot be argued or refuted, nor their political implications drawn out. We cannot say that belief in the goddess, for example, will result in an egalitarian society. Neither arguable

earth. Myth in turn becomes reified and objectified, despite its falsity, and acquires a dangerously commanding status over the individual's sense of reality and political awareness.

Even the most well-intentioned priestess must address goddess-communicants not on the level of their political citizenship but on the level of their emotional needs. She must divest them of their rationality ("imagine you're a tree" is a common ritual injunction) and implicitly ask them to follow her into the irrational and arbitrary future that myth offers. She must ask them to model the new society on an era of ignorance and superstition, of parochialism and irrationality (as "keys to a better life"). Goddess worshippers in turn close their eyes, pray to the goddess, and leap into a mythopoetic unknown, fraught with major social dangers.

Because the politics of myth appeals to the nonrational, it opens the door in the Green movement to the dark side of ecological politics of which the Germans are now so wary -- and to the New Dark Age that this country seems to be fast approaching.

Goddess worship is less a cause for hope than a symptom of malaise. We live in a society in which the manipulation of myths, the production and con-

be the loss of rational political activity and a healthy naturalism that brings us into real communication with nature. The "key to a better life" in a political movement must remain political and ecological. Ecological politics depends on a firm sense of self and a firm sense of the difference between illusion and reality. An ecological movement that indulges our fantasies and renders us captive to spectacularized and commodified societies will eventually deprive us of our freedom as individuals and as social beings. □

#### Footnotes

1. Charlene Spretnak, "The Politics of Women's

16. Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex*, p. 238; Ernestine Freidl, *Women and Men*, p. 75; Campbell, p. 21; Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Godesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (New York: Shocken Books, 1976), p. 15.

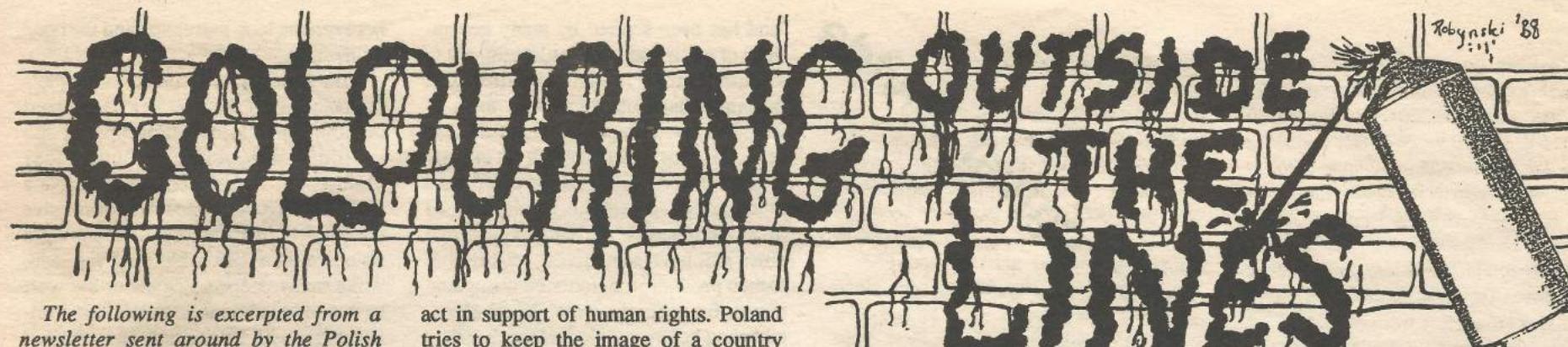
17. Sherry Ortner and Harriet B. Whitehead, *Introduction to Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 10.

18. See Pomeroy, "Selected Bibliography," p. 352.

19. Starhawk, *Spiral Dance*, p. 10; Carol P. Christ, "Why Women Need the Goddess," in Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 278.

20. Spretnak, "Politics," p. 396; *Spiritual Dimension*, pp. 57, 62.

21. H. and H.A. Frankfort, introduction to *Before Philosophy* (University of Chicago, 1946; Penguin, 1968), p. 20.



The following is excerpted from a newsletter sent around by the Polish Anarchist Group Freedom and Peace (WIP). Some of the articles have been edited and minimal changes in grammar have been made.

The Gdansk chapter of WIP consists of several people, up to 30 years in age. They have lots of ideas, which they try to realize (at least some of them). They struggle for the legal recognition for the right to conscientious objection to military service, environmental protection and ecology.

In the Gdansk region, the most important ecological problem is Zarnowiec, a nuclear power plant which is being built about 35 km. from the city of the same name.

The people of WIP are against the death penalty and all forms of oppression, no matter what grounds for the oppression. They also work with oppositional groups to try to have political prisoners released.

The irregular magazine of Gdansk WIP is *A Cappella*. Its authors are influenced by anarchistic ideas, but they do not kill princes, First Secretaries, or Prosecutors. As all participants in the movement, they believe in non-violence as the only acceptable method of struggle for their aims.

WIP takes up problems which do not enjoy much popularity in Poland, like vegetarianism. Vegetarianism is viewed as treason in a country where meat is rationed. Because of the anti-institutional ferment they arouse, engaging in hunger strikes for releasing imprisoned conscientious objectors, forming a vegetarian collective, people sometimes look on them as idiots. Still, things change slowly.

Almost all participants in the Gdansk chapter of WIP have signed individual peace treaties with people from different countries. Gdansk has also befriended groups with similar interests in Sweden and France. WIP gladly welcomes visitors.

Our situation is lousy. The fact that most participants in the movement are not imprisoned now does not mean that everything is O.K. Our flats are constantly searched, things like notebooks, addresses, unofficial publications and books, typewriters, posters are confiscated. Cases of house-breaking are not rare.

People who are known to be active in WIP are constantly arrested for 48 hours. Petty offence courts (*kolegium*) are working all the time. These courts have become an extremely obedient tool in the hands of the security service. Their verdicts are always the same: fines up to 80,000 zl (slightly more than 3 average monthly salaries). Acquittals never happen. Repressions which affect people active in WIP are very severe. If you refuse to pay the fines they can seize your salary (but not the whole of it at one time). Those who do not have steady jobs are persecuted by bailiffs.

We consider the fines, searches and arrests to be absolutely groundless. They affect people who try to defend imprisoned C.O.'s who are active in popularizing ecological ideas and who

act in support of human rights. Poland tries to keep the image of a country without political prisoners, although there are, sometimes under different accusations. But repressions for one's convictions are well possible without long sentences. Those who have anything in common with WIP are usually refused their passports.

You can do much to help us by spreading information about the situation in Poland. There are still many people in our country who are persecuted for political reasons. Some have been fined up to 400,000 zl. There is a great need to protest against *kolegium* and to demand cancellation of fines as an indication of illegal repression. A single leaflet of *Amnesty International*, a book, a photograph, a notebook, etc. can be grounds for *kolegium* for "provoking public unrest". One of the ways is to ask Polish institutions why peace activists are persecuted and fined in Poland. You are also welcome here for joint actions.

With best wishes,  
from the Gdansk chapter of WIP.

#### The refusal of passports -- Polish house arrest:

Granting an inhabitant of the Polish People's Republic a passport is a privilege; by no means is it a simple right having its source in the fact of Polish citizenship. The granting of a passport functions as a prize for good conduct. Refusal is a punishment for undesired behaviour. The decision is up to the officers of the Security Service, who do this favour for the authorities. To apply for the pass one first has to get an official invitation confirmed by the Polish embassy. Every Polish embassy in the West has special invitations for sale. The inviting person has to buy the form, fill it out, sign material responsibility and send the form to Poland. With this form, permission from your work, from the army if you are a man (it is exceptional to get it), and another form with very detailed questions (about the whole family in the country and abroad, organizational membership, who else in the family has applied for a pass, etc.), you can finally apply. The waiting period is about six weeks. After that time you get your passport or not. Appeals have no sense. If you are lucky you get your pass accompanied by a special card. This card indicates the country you are going to and how long you intend to stay. All deviations are viewed as an offense and punished with refusing to issue the pass at the next application. When you come back you must immediately return the pass to the police and the same procedure repeats if you want to go away next time. Thus, passports are a tool of political repression in the hands of the security service. The government claims that all this is necessary to assure that all Polish citizens are not without livelihood abroad. This is obvious rubbish in a country which absolutely does not care about people's livelihood at home. Besides, we do not feel "citizens" but feudal serfs, who must not move freely and are deprived of the material symbol of citizenship, the passport. It is used to control social behaviour; many people are afraid to act freely because they fear

they will be deprived of one of the basic human rights. So they lie low and do not come back to Poland at the first opportunity. Those refused passports should all be regarded as political prisoners affected with a sort of house arrest. We demand that all political prisoners under "house arrest" in Poland are immediately released! □

#### Letter

Dear friends,

In the situation where mass media and all means of spreading information are strictly monopolized by the state, it becomes important to enliven the walls. Especially that the walls in our country are sad, gray and expressionless. Our cities are dominated by communist slogans. In order to oppose this we need spray paints in bright colours with which one could write on the walls.

Unfortunately this kind of equipment is not available in our country. This is why we would be extremely grateful for any kind of contribution in the form of sprays.

If you were kind enough and wanted to participate in creating graffiti on Polish walls then, please send us as many as you can but no more than 3 containers in one parcel.

With best regards

Krzysztof Galinski  
uL. Kraszewskiego 37/34  
81-815 SOPOT, POLAND

Wojtek Jankowski  
uL. Swierczewskiego 10/2  
SOPOT, POLAND

Klaudi Wesotek  
uL. Stupska  
Gdansk, POLAND

*Some important notes about spray paint: Sending aerosol cans on an airplane could result in an explosion. Make sure all aerosol cans are sent SURFACE MAIL. Check with your local post office for instructions on how to properly identify packages containing spray paint, and other potentially hazardous materials.*

*Some spray paints contain fluorocarbons, which destroy the ozone layer. Please buy containers which do not contain fluorocarbons.*

*Another item, which is much safer to send, and would undoubtedly be happily received (though perhaps not so happily as spray paint) would be magnum (1/2" wide) markers.*

## ATTENTION YOUTH!

This flyer, produced by the *Syndicat des Eleves*, is being distributed in an attempt to find out if similar groups exist, and if not, then if similar individuals do.

The *Syndicat des Eleves* came into existence in 1986 when various students at a Montreal high school decided to organize against the authoritarian nature of their school in particular, and of their society in general. Almost a year later the *Syndicat* died as a result of severe yet banal changes in the members' high school. A new principal was called in to deal with the troublemakers and "ringleaders", and after a few months the school environment had become so dead and boring that most of the *Syndicat* either dropped out, got expelled or forgot all about rebellion.

The *Syndicat* is now a mailing address cum clearinghouse for any information pertaining to youth/children's liberation. For purposes of clarity the *Syndicat* defines youth/children's liberation as:

*Being opposed to the many cultural forms of children's and youth's oppression: the family (as we know it), ageism, sexism, racism, sexphobia, (sexphobia meaning the incredible fear that we have of children's sexuality).*

*Being opposed to the many structural forms of children's and youth's oppression: schools (including most alternative schools), psychiatric hospitals, orphanages, reform schools, youth detention centers and*

*all laws.*

*Being opposed to lots of other things that are too many to list.*

*Supporting attempts by children to take power over their own lives, be these attempts "political" or otherwise. When young people organize collectively to get something done (be it to get a teacher fired or to put on a play or set up a garage sale) they show to all those who care to see (including other young people) that children/youth can organize autonomously and can take care of things themselves.*

*Supporting people who live with children. The more people helping children's guardians to take care of children, the easier it is for these guardians to let go of "their" children when their children want to be let go. Also, the more people taking care of a single child the less chance of any particular adult getting burnt out and abusing the child, and the more chance that said child will have some degree of emotional independence from their guardians.*

All groups and individuals that are interested in discussing or adding to the above definition of children/youth liberation, or, even more important, who are interested in doing something about it, are invited to write the *Syndicat des Eleves* c/o Librairie Alternative, 2035 Boul. St.Laurent, Montreal, Quebec

# Crossing the Great Ideological Divide

## Eco-politics East and West

by Brian Tokar

*The following is an excerpt from a longer article which is to be published in full in the Nov.-Dec. issue of Alternatives (University of Waterloo, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1).*

*We are printing the last third of the article, give or take a few paragraphs. In the first two sections, Brian discusses the evolution of social ecology and deep ecology: the pioneering role of social ecologists in fusing social and ecological concerns, and the passionate and practical commitment of the deep ecologists to preserving the natural world.*

*In the second section, Brian offers a refutation of some of the myths of overpopulation. This third section deals with some of the cultural sources of their difference in perspective, and with how to go beyond the impasse of the current debate.*

### Myths from the Land

It is not difficult to understand how a strong devotion to environmental activism has driven many people to the grim view of human nature held by many deep ecologists. Modern urban society is virtually designed to bring out the worst in human nature, and deep ecology, at its best, has raised the full ambiguity of humanity's present role. Such an approach rings especially true in the western United States where public devotion to the wilderness is often the strongest, but the patterns of human settlement and the ways in which most people actually live their lives reflect a tremendous personal distance from a very present natural world. People in the far west often live surrounded by considerable expanses of largely undeveloped land. But nature, for the most part, is still just a place to be visited on weekends and enjoyed in one's leisure time.

The places where most people actually live -- especially in California but increasingly so throughout the arid west -- are large cities and suburban housing developments inflicted upon the landscape over a very short span of years, with a nearly total lack of sensitivity to natural patterns. Wealthy people live up in the hills and poor people live in the more congested flat lands below. Human settlements are often striking impositions upon the land, built by speculators out to

make quick profits, and usually completely dependent upon automobile transportation and imported water. The lines between the places where people live and everywhere else are much sharper than in most of the country, and this cannot help but shape the way people view their own place in nature.

The impacts of civilization upon the western US are exaggerated by both the suddenness and the scale of development. Vast tracts of land tend to be swallowed up all at once by massive commercial ventures. Thousands of acres of ancient forest are devoured in a single logging season. Mining companies swallow up entire mountains and vast canyons are still being dammed up to secure growing urban water supplies. In the San Francisco Bay area, one can find thousands of people who grew up in fairly rural agricultural communities that have been completely sacrificed to sprawling high-tech suburbs in just a decade or two. People appear to be invading from everywhere.

It is no surprise that, for the last few years, people asked about the most important problem facing the Bay Area have cited "overpopulation", next only to "transportation" and "pollution". It might have been more accurate for people to cite "overdevelopment" or simply "congestion", but the idea of overpopulation has so influenced the way people think about the world that many of people's concerns about the declining quality of urban life have come to be understood in these terms.

This is in considerable contrast to the situation in northern New England, for example, where many communities are facing a high rate of speculative development without a large influx of new permanent residents. There, the overt influence of outside development interests, the tourism industry, federal tax code changes favouring investments in second homes, and other institutional factors are far more transparent. In most of the US, however, one sees the interplay between people's interpretations of their own life experiences and the prevailing ideology of growth and development seriously distorting popular perceptions of the world around us.

The western US brand of deep ecological thinking also reflects a very distinct cultural relationship to the land that has evolved partly from the ethic of the early western frontier. Easterners generally live in highly socialized landscapes. The

land has been scarred by many generations of cultivation and settlement, not to mention large industrial cities and megalopolitan suburbs. As in most of Europe, relationships to the land are seen in social terms, whether one lives in a city or a small rural village. However, these relationships are often not wholly defined in modern terms, as many towns and cities still have some living relationship to their pre-industrial roots. New England towns, for example, were almost all established before people had the means -- or the desire -- to completely reshape the land. Despite many historical failings, they were often founded upon well-articulated ideals of harmony with the land, and people worked for generations to evolve relatively stable -- though distinctly Europeanized -- relationships with the forests, the rivers, the soils and, in better times, the native people.<sup>2</sup>

A pastoral rather than a frontier ethic shaped settlement patterns in the East, and was often carried by settlers across the Appalachian Mountains to the mid-western heartland.<sup>3</sup> Until the opening of the Western frontier to individual homesteaders in the mid-nineteenth century, patterns of settlement and land use were often decided on a communal basis, and a co-operative relationship with the land often followed from the ideal -- and the necessity -- of co-operative relationships between people in village communities. Visionaries like Thomas Jefferson attributed the democratic character of early

between the lone individual and the open wilderness.<sup>7</sup>

This historical difference in people's outlook toward the land lies at the heart of some of the conflicts among the various approaches to ecological philosophy. Social ecologists in New England have inherited an affirmative vision of human communities sharing a co-operative relationship with the land, while many deep ecologists in the west have embraced a more isolationist frontier ethic, with its harsher, more rugged view of both wild nature and human nature. Neither view begins to reflect the full complexity of people's experience in the US, or the wide range of adaptations to both natural and economically imposed pressures that people developed at various points in the country's history. Neither do they reflect the growing uniformity of suburban developments since World War II. However, the myths live on and have had striking effects on how people in different places view their own ways of life.

Contemporary cultural trends complicate the situation further, with more European-influenced analytic ways of thinking having become most highly valued in the east and more personalized and experiential modes of expression having been more fully cultivated near the Pacific coast. Westerners might, indeed, value the wilderness more highly, but the romance of a withdrawal to the wilderness often becomes, for urban



America to people's special relationship with the land, and for years resisted the development of large-scale manufacturing industry for fear of compromising this relationship.<sup>4</sup>

The land ethics of the far West were more thoroughly shaped by the myths of rugged individualism, as personified in the figure of the lone frontier scout. These individuals also had special personal connections to the land, both as a source of spiritual nourishment and as a powerful force to be tamed.<sup>5</sup> Their relationship with people who came to settle on the land was complex, often following the historical example of Daniel Boone, who was said to shy away from inhabited places while at the same time playing a very deliberate role in seeking out "new kingdoms" to be colonized by land speculators from back east.<sup>6</sup> From the earliest explorers and the mythical frontiersmen to the cowboys of western lore and the pioneering naturalists of the early 20th century, the most celebrated relationship in western mythology was

dwellers, a way of escaping their own complicity with the earth-denying ways of consumer society.

In the February 1988 issue of the local San Francisco Bay area Sierra Club newspaper, Dave Foreman set out to explain why protecting wilderness is the most important goal for environmentalists to pursue. To Foreman, the diversity of nature that may only exist in places far removed from human settlements provides the real basis for natural evolution. Why concentrate our efforts on preserving these places? "So that there is something to come back after human beings, through whatever means, destroy their civilization," he explains.<sup>8</sup>

Many people of vastly different points of view have come to see that our present civilization is headed for collapse. Unfortunately, it is currently poised to carry the rest of the earth down with it. Whether by instantaneous nuclear holocaust or by the more gradual degradation of the earth's life-sustaining qualities -- the forests, the air, the protective ozone layer and all of

the earth's climatic patterns -- the course of ecological collapse is underway and the chances for survival often appear slim. So it is a noble effort to fight for the few remaining wild places, in the hope that they might someday offer the seeds for global renewal.

However, if we are to take the lessons of ecology seriously, we know that everything in nature is far more thoroughly interconnected. Environmental technocrats might be able to predict by systems analysis that so many acres of such-and-such type of habitat can survive as an isolated unit but, in reality, no place is unaffected by the ravages of our present ecologically-disastrous way of life. Phenomena such as acid rain, the greenhouse effect, and the thinning of the ozone layer make it clear that no partial solution can really sustain life, no matter how well-meaning and environmentally responsible it may seem.

Our civilization is headed for destruction, and the destruction of many -- possibly most -- of its defining institutions should be actively encouraged by earth-loving people. But if we leave a barren landscape of concrete and ashes with a few patches of green scattered among them, we cannot really claim we have bought the earth's survival. This absurd fantasy offers as grim a view as that of the armed survivalists who build private fortresses in the hills and the deserts, their basements stocked with canned food in the hope that they and their families will survive a nuclear war even if nobody else does. The ecological survival of every part of the earth now hinges on our ability

whales and the birds that they do not think about society at all. For Naess, only "shallow ecologists" "think that reforming human relations toward nature can be done within the existing structure of society."<sup>9</sup>

### Living Ecologically

The major challenge for Greens, I believe, is to create a broad, transformative social movement that can completely recast our society along ecological lines. In *The Green Alternative*, I proposed ecological approaches to many current social problems and outlined some political strategies that might help shape such a long-term effort. I proposed a radical decentralization of political and economic power, a merging of protest politics with efforts to build sustainable alternatives, and a new vision-oriented approach to political organization.<sup>10</sup> Efforts along these lines have begun in earnest in many parts of Europe and North America and all kinds of ecologists need to come together to make it a whole reality.

Social ecologist Murray Bookchin has probably gone the farthest toward describing in philosophical terms what a truly ecological society might look like. It would restore the best qualities of traditional earth-centered societies -- strong communal ties among people, complementarity of social roles, a deep respect for both natural patterns and human craft, and the sharing of community resources to sustain everyone's basic life needs. At the same time such a

society would imply the existence of an organic core that meets the deeply felt biological needs for care, cooperation, security and love. Freedom would no longer be placed in opposition to nature, individuality to society, choice to necessity, or personality to the needs of social coherence.<sup>11</sup>

Deep ecologists, on the other hand, see us as mired in an unresolvable conflict between anthropocentric and biocentric values. Others are beginning to see that the Green movement needs to transcend

the sanctity of all life, the joy and pain of birth and growth, and a full awareness of natural cycles.<sup>12</sup> Ecofeminism offers especially important insights toward these ends. Radical ecologists should seek to evolve nurturing ways of living and working with the earth and its cycles that could supplant the manipulative and ultimately destructive approaches of modern science and technology.

Politically, radical ecologists struggle for bioregional autonomy, refusing to cooperate with oppressive institutions that

**The major challenge for Greens...is to create a broad, transformative social movement that can completely recast our society along ecological lines.**

this division, to embody a new ecocentrism that refuses to place humanity either above or below the rest of nature. This eco-centrism would place primary value on the ecological relationships among people in a community, among communities sharing one of the earth's diverse bioregions, and among bioregional confederations joining cooperatively to sustain the earth we all share. Intimate relationships, both among people and between people and the rest of the biosphere, would be the highest source of value and would evolve to reflect a more thoroughly ecological sensibility.

Instead of becoming further mired in sectarian debates between philosophical approaches that increasingly define themselves in opposition to one another, eco-activists need to begin evolving a broader approach, firmly grounded in a commitment to ecologically-sound living. Just as a diverse but coherent ecofeminism emerged as a creative body of thought from the women's peace movement, the anti-nuclear movement and a variety of feminist approaches to earth-based spirituality, earth-loving people from a variety of orientations need to begin working to evolve a more activist radical ecology that merges the best of the various existing tendencies, and furthers eco-centric principles in the search for ecologically sound ways of living and relating to the earth.<sup>13</sup>

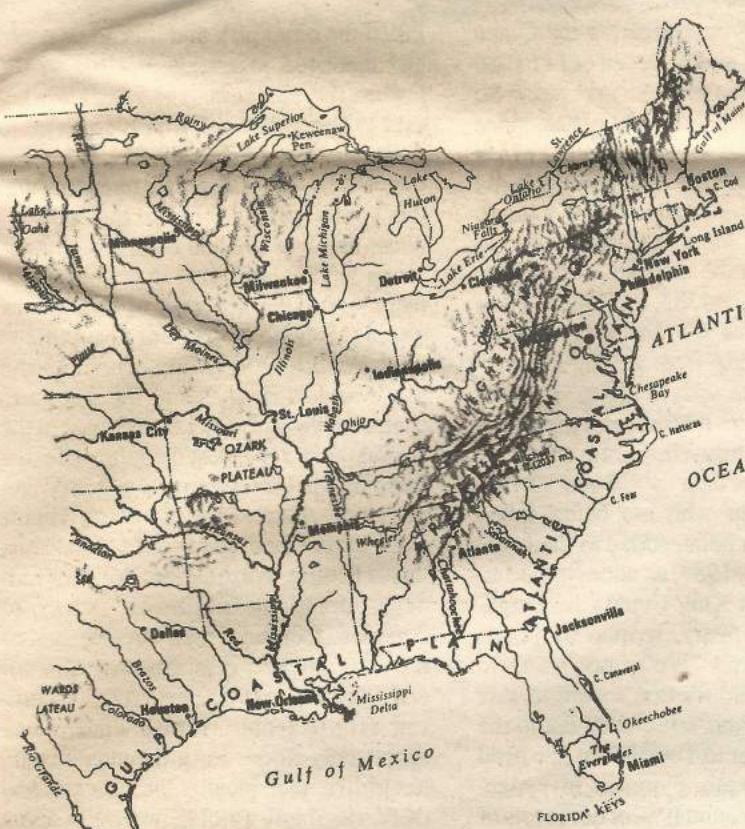
Such a radical ecology would be grounded in the growing experiences of the Green, bioregional, and other ecological movements, while acknowledging its roots in earlier social movements, in the ecological wisdom of indigenous peoples throughout the world, and in a full ecological diversity of political, cultural, philosophical and spiritual approaches to reconciling humanity and the rest of nature. It would embody an understanding of the dialectical relationships between the social and ecological dimensions of life, seeking to reveal both the social and political roots of ecological problems and the origins of social problems in the culturally imposed alienation between human beings and the rest of the natural world.

Such an approach would embrace social ecology's celebration of nature as a grounding for human ethics and creativity -- a potential "realm of freedom" -- while placing primary value on the wealth of personal and communal relationships among people and between people and the earth. It would dissolve the false separation between "the natural evolution of the planet and the social history of the species."<sup>14</sup> It would seek to celebrate and enhance the power of people to shape our own history, create bases for living and working co-operatively, and help us to become more compassionate voices for our own emotions,

now exert control from outside of the community and also transforming all hierarchical relations among people and institutions within communities and regions. Differences among people would be celebrated as essential aspects of ecological diversity and never used as a reason for one group of people to dominate any other. The growing bioregional movement in North America probably best illustrates how political action, creative cultural and spiritual expression, philosophical contemplation and personal growth and change can be seen as mutually enhancing aspects of an ecological transformation of both self and society. □

### Footnotes

1. San Francisco Chronicle, December 17, 1987, p. 1.
2. Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: Myth and Symbol in the American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950). William Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), and Frederick Turner, in *Beyond Geography* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1983) take a grimmer view. Ecologist Jamie Sayen has suggested that the soils and wet climate of Northern New England make these forests better able to recover from disturbances -- see *Earth First!* journal, May 1988, p. 4.
3. Smith, pp. 127-130; also Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1964).
4. Marx, pp. 120-133, 146-150.
5. Smith, especially pp. 59-70.
6. See *ibid.*, pp. 45-58; also Vernon Lewis Parington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1927), vol. I, p. 133.
7. Smith, pp. 71-89; also Michael Cohen, *The Pathless Way: John Muir and American Wilderness* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984).
8. The Sierra Club Yodler, February 1988, pp. 8-11, 16.
9. Arne Naess, "The Basis of Deep Ecology," *Resurgence* no. 126 (January 1988), especially pp. 5-6. *Resurgence* is distributed in the U.S. by Rodale Press, Emmaus, Pennsylvania.
10. Brian Tokar, *The Green Alternative: Creating An Ecological Alternative* (San Pedro, California: R.E. Miles, 1987).
11. Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire Books, 1982), p. 319.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
13. On the politics of ecofeminism, see, for example, Ynestra King, "The Ecology of Feminism and the Feminism of Ecology," in *Harbinger*, no. 2 (Fall 1983) -- 211 E. 10th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10003; Charlene Spretnak, "Ecofeminism: Our Roots and Flowering," in *Woman of Power*, no. 9 (Spring 1988) -- P.O. Box 766, Canal St. Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10013. The definition of ecofeminism has become increasingly contentious following an attempt by Kirkpatrick Sale to report on a major national ecofeminist conference without having attended. See *The Nation*, September 26, 1987.
14. Ynestra King, "Ecofeminism: On the Necessity of History and Mystery," *Woman of Power* no. 9 (Spring 1988), p. 44.
15. Tokar, pp. 9-19. See also "A Basic Call to Consciousness" (Akwasasne Notes, 1978, Mohawk Nation, Rooseveltown, N.Y. 13683); also Starhawk, *Truth or Dare: Encounters with Power, Authority and Mystery* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987).



to cast aside the unbalanced ways of our present civilization, stop raping the earth for the short-term gain of a few, and create a way of life that expresses renewed personal and communal ties to the earth and all its living beings. The destructive power of the present industrial system and its military-industrial complex defies all halfway solutions.

Arne Naess, the Norwegian philosopher who coined the term "deep ecology", is critical of most of the prevailing trends in the ecology movement. In his 1987 speech to the British Schumacher Society, he criticized both people who think that changes in our relations with nature will automatically follow from changes in social institutions and those who seem so fixated on the

society would uphold the values of universal humanity, personal autonomy and freedom that have emerged over the past several centuries. Humanity would "re-enter natural evolution," enhancing fecundity and diversity on nature's own terms and rejecting synthetic, manufactured ways of living. Personal and cultural development would be founded upon an "ecological interplay of social freedom and natural freedom."<sup>11</sup> The institutions that ruthlessly exploit resources, despoil the earth and repress people's deepest desires would be replaced with free, fully participatory forms evolved to foster the fullest relationship of humanity-in-nature:

"Hierarchy, in effect, would be replaced by interdependence, and con-

# America's "Disappeared"

## an interview with Daisy Anarchy

for protection. So they thought that the person who was doing the murdering would have to be someone that the women trusted on some level, because no men had showed up dead after trying to murder any of these girls. So that's another thing that pointed toward the police; if a woman thought that she was getting arrested, she wasn't going to pull her piece on him.

After that police officer who was the

going to take you to a doctor, so you might as well confess because we have all the evidence against you." In the morning they had to release him because they didn't have one shred of evidence. They even admitted to the press that they were telling him all this cause they just wanted to get him to confess. Basically it was a blatant attempt at scapegoating.

In the fall of 1986, they cut several police officers off of the task force that

mer of 1982 there was a 16 year-old girl who ended up in a halfway house, where there was a social worker who had really strong ties to the Seattle women's community, and this girl told her this story, that she and another girl had been working in the Seatac strip, which is the road between the airport and Seattle, where most of the first Green River murder victims had been working before they were murdered, and they were approached by some men who offered to pay them to pick up a suitcase from someone that was coming in off an incoming flight and carry it through the airport. So they did this, they picked up the suitcase and carried it through the airport, and then these guys took them out to the Green River and



by Lynna Landstreet

*Daisy Anarchy is a poet, sex trade worker, and member of the Green River Working Group in San Francisco, a group that was formed to investigate and publicize the Green River Murders in the Seattle-Tacoma area in Washington, in solidarity with the Seattle Women's Coalition to Stop the Green River Murders. At the recent Anarchist Unconvention in Toronto, she presented a workshop on the murders, which came as quite an eye-opener to everyone who attended it, since most of us had either never heard of or just heard vague rumours about what is in fact the largest -- and perhaps the most covered-up -- serial murder case in the history of the U.S. Later I interviewed her for KIO.*

**LL:** Tell me about the Green River Murders.

**DA:** The Green River murder case is the largest serial murder case in the history of the United States. It's been happening since 1982 and it's ongoing, it's happening today. Over 100 women have been killed, mostly young Black prostitute women, average age 19 -- that's why most people haven't heard about it. It started in 1982 when the bodies of six women were found washed up on the banks of the Green River. The rumour started circulating immediately among the girls on the street that a cop had been responsible. And a police officer investigating the Green River murders also said that he thought that a policeman could have been responsible.

There were lots of things that led up to this, including the fact that most of the first women were killed using choke holds, a type of strangulation that doesn't leave any bruises, which police are trained in; a lot of the bodies were found on police academy land; and a lot of the women had been carrying pieces (guns)

head of the first Green River task force told the press that he thought that a cop could be responsible, he was fired. The next head of the investigation was a man named Frank Adamson who used to be the head of the Seattle Police Dept.'s Internal Investigation Bureau, so he was used to covering things up, he knew how to deal with reporters and journalists when they came asking questions about the Green River Murders. If they asked "Do you think it could be a police officer?" he'd say "Well, it could be a reporter."

One of the things that the police have been doing ever since these murders started, and they're still doing now, is when a woman is murdered, they don't always add her to the official list. This keeps their numbers, the official Green River murder list, down, lower than it actually is. And what they'll do is they'll tell the families of the victims "Well, off the record, you can consider your daughter, or your sister, or whoever, a victim of the Green River Murders," but they won't add the woman's name to the list.

There's been a really intense police-press blackout on this whole case. It's amazing that, even though it's the largest serial murder case in the history of the U.S., and it's ongoing, that most people, even as close as California, don't know what's happening.

In 1986, the police arrested a construction worker, and leaked to the press that they had found the Green River Murderer. They took this guy in for questioning, and meanwhile they were totally ransacking his house with the press there, breaking into TV shows with bulletins on how the search through the house was going, and they took this guy into a room covered with pictures of the victims, and pictures of the construction worker himself, and they said to him, "Look, we know you did it, we have all the evidence against you, but we just think you're sick, we're not going to kill you, we're just

was supposedly investigating the Green River Murders, and in December of 1986 they quietly disbanded the task force. So it's been about a year and a half since there's even been an official police task force looking into the murders. Basically they want everyone just to forget about it, and they're not adding any new names to the list -- when the murders started happening in 1982 and '83, they had a list of women, besides the list of murdered women, who they were willing to admit were part of the serial killings, a list of women who were missing and presumed dead. So if they find one of these women's bodies then they'll add it to the list, but women who are being killed recently are not being added to the list.

In October of 1987, an anonymous letter went out on King County Investigation Dept. stationary, written by police officers who said "We're not going to sign this because we don't want to lose our jobs." And this letter went out to the press, it went out to Tim Harold, the head of the King County Criminal Investigation Department, and it went out to lots of other people who were working on the case, it was even sent to the Green River Working Group post office box in San Francisco (the San Francisco support group for the Women's Coalition To Stop The Green River Murders). Basically what it was was accusing the police of a cover-up, it confessed that there's been at least a police cover-up for the last six years. And nothing appeared in the papers except for one very small story in one paper.

Lots of the Green River murder victims were killed right after leaving the police station, the last time they were seen was at the police station, or waiting for a bus after being released from the police station. So we have all different kinds of information that points to police responsibility for the murders.

There are lots of other things that we know that point to the police. In the sum-

killed the other girl, and this 16 year-old girl managed to escape and hid in the bushes for 72 hours. The social worker said to her, "Well, why didn't you go to the police with this?" and she said "It was the police." Then the police found out that this young girl had been to this halfway house and that she had been seen by this social worker, and tried to get her to tell them where the girl was, or to trick the girl into coming to the police station, but of course this social worker was cool and she wouldn't do that, but she did go to check out the girl's story. She went to the airport the next week at the same time that these flights were supposed to be coming in. Now, there were incoming flights from Miami, and this is not *Miami Vice*, this is Seattle, Washington, but your rednecks up in the northwest corner of America, they love their cocaine just as much as anybody else. Anyway, this social worker went to the gate for an incoming flight from Miami which was supposedly where this girl had gone with her girlfriend to pick up the suitcase, and there was a girl waiting, and there was a guy sitting next to her reading a newspaper, and she waited until people started getting off the plane and a guy carrying a suitcase walked up to the girl, and then she went over to the girl and said "I advise you to get the hell out of here." The girl took off running and the guy with the newspaper yelled "Shit!", threw down the newspaper and took off running.

So an assumption that you can make from this whole story is that some people in the police department were running drugs from Miami to Seattle and were using the girls to carry the drugs through the airport in case anything happened and they got stopped, and it sounds like they were just dumping them afterwards. And you can ask yourself, well, why would they need to kill the women after doing this? But most of these guys are fucking nuts anyway, these vice cops, and I've got a feeling that once they saw that they

could kill them and get away with it -- and they've been getting away with it for over six years now -- they probably just figured they could keep on getting away with it, because nobody is raising their voices against the murder of all these young Black prostitute women. Not all of them are prostitutes, not all of them are Black, but most of them are.

Another problem is that it's pretty much public knowledge, and has been ever since 1982, since those first newspaper articles that asked questions about whether it was a police officer, that the police were probably doing it and just letting the whole situation continue. And I'm sure that lots of guys who might be very violent men but normally wouldn't go so far as to murder a woman are going to think, "Well, if I do this, they're just going to attribute it to the Green River Murders." And that's probably why the list is so long.

Also there's been a string of murders of Black prostitute women in Los Angeles in the last two years, and there's been twenty women who work in the sex industry murdered in Vancouver in the last few years, which probably has a lot to do with the fascism that went down around Expo, but since Vancouver is only a few hours away from Seattle, I'm sure all the pigs on the West Coast, whether they wear police uniforms or not, really feel like it's open season on sex industry workers, on Black women, and on women in general, but again it's the Black sex industry workers who end up getting murdered more often, because the sexism, racism, and classism in society pretty much guarantee that the press isn't going to make much of a fuss about it, and the people follow the press so much that if the press doesn't deal with it, people aren't going to know about it, or they'll feel powerless about it. And the sexism, racism, and classism in the left, from the liberal left all the way to the anarchist and supposed feminist left, guarantees that not much of a fuss is going to be made over the murders of Black prostitute women there either.

LL: What's been happening with the groups that are working on this situation,

like the Women's Coalition in Seattle?

DA: The Women's Coalition To Stop The Green River Murders was organized in 1984. It originally consisted of over 50 women, women that were family and friends of women that had been murdered, women that worked in the sex industry, women in the lesbian community, women in the more straight women's left, women in the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party), some anarchist women, s/m dykes, a lot of different kinds of women.

One of the things that happened around the time that this group was organized was that a bill was put forth in the legislature *in response to the Green River Murders*, which in effect put a bounty on the heads of prostitute women. They introduced a bill in the state legislature that would have given \$100 to anyone giving information to the police leading to the arrest and conviction of a prostitute woman. Basically this bounty bill would have meant open season on prostitute women. And this was all in the guise of being a response to the Green River Murders. So basically what the government was saying was that the problem was the prostitute women and not the murderers. They didn't care about more money for women and children so that women didn't have to be out there in the first place, or abolishing the laws against prostitutes so that they could work from their own homes, or wherever they wanted to work from and not be seen as scapegoats; their interest was simply in scapegoating the prostitutes more. Anyway, the Women's Coalition To Stop The Green River Murders successfully organized against this bill. The bill did not pass, thanks to some very hard work by some women in the Coalition.

However, soon after that there was a major split in the Coalition because most women did not want to take a stand for the rights of women working in the sex industry, to be seen as supporting the rights of prostitute women. And this is clearly a case where if over a hundred white college girls had been murdered, honey, you'd *hear* about it! This never would have happened, it wouldn't have

been going on for so long, there never would have been such a successful press blackout, if it had been anybody other than Black prostitute women. So the break-up of the Women's Coalition To Stop The Green River Murders -- or rather, not the break-up of it, because it still exists, but the leaving of lots of women from it -- had a lot to do with racism and classism. All these white women who wanted to take a stand, at least abstractly and theoretically, against violence against women, but when it comes down to taking a stand side by side with women that work in the sex industry, side by side with working class women and Black women, who might be forced into the sex industry, they won't do it. So the Coalition went down from about 50 women to about 10. And they've had some pretty successful actions since then. In 1986 they took over the offices of the police Green River task force for a couple days. The press basically tried to make them out to be a bunch of freaks, you know, Lesbians and punk rockers and prostitutes, and in the eyes of the press those are freaks.

LL: What has the media response to the murders been like in general, when there has been a response?

DA: Basically where it's at right now is the police and media just want you to forget about it, the press doesn't really have any continuing articles on it. A lot of the press that it has gotten locally, in Seattle, has been more slanted toward, "Well, how do we crack down on prostitution?" as opposed to any attempts to make the police accountable for their cover-up and their actions, and as opposed to asking questions about why the largest serial murder case in the history of the United States is continuing, and why there isn't more of a public outcry. They've been treating it as if the murders were just a natural result of prostitution.

Another thing that I'd really like to emphasize here is that perhaps, even if these women had been something like Black housekeepers, instead of Black prostitutes, this issue would have gotten more support from the left. And I really think it shows not only the racism, but the sexism

and classism of the left, including the anarchist left, that there's not more support for the Women's Coalition To Stop The Green River Murders, and that more attention hasn't been paid to this by the left internationally.

LL: What can people in other cities who want to show their support or get involved in some way do?

DA: Well, one thing that they can do is that they can pass the word around, let people know that the largest serial murder case in the history of the U.S. is still going on, that more than 100 women, mostly young Black prostitute women, have been killed over the last six years in the Seattle-Tacoma, Washington area, and that it's still going on, and that we have a lot of information that points to the police as being responsible. And there's a lot people can do to spread this information; they can do radio shows; they can write articles about it in their local magazines, newspapers and fanzines; if they have access to national and international media, they should use it. They can write us at the post office box, if they want help or need more information, if they're doing support work, if they're doing articles and interviews, cause we'd like to see articles that are put out. And myself and Cookie Hunt from Seattle are more than willing to do interviews. We can do them by telephone if necessary.

So I guess that's the main thing right now is keeping in touch with us, writing to our post office box, getting yourself on our mailing list so that when we have demonstrations we can contact you if you are into supporting demonstrations, or so that when we have more information we can send it to you, so that you can use your access to the media to get that information out. The important thing is just to spread the word any way you can, because nothing's going to change if people don't find out about it. □

*The Green River Working Group can be contacted at 2215-R Market St., #126, San Francisco, CA, USA, 94114. It's probably a good idea to enclose a U.S. stamp or IRC.*

#### by Lone Wolf Circles

"Just worry about your own backyard," they tell me, piling up discouragement on me like a wet, heavy snow against my lodge door. It's a cold-steel freight-train running over me with its sequential carloads of loneliness, voluntary poverty, and now their soot-covered mechanized misunderstanding.

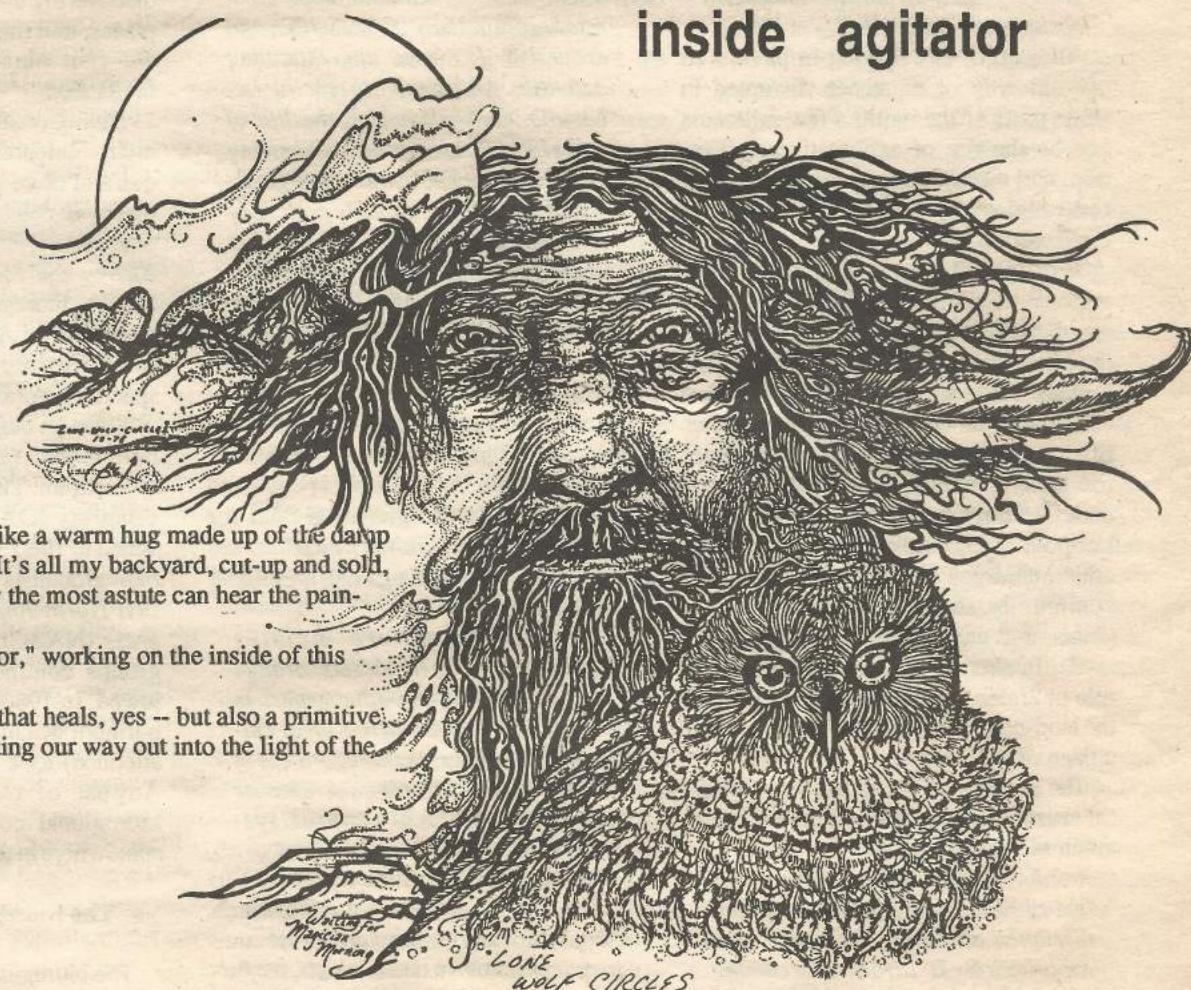
This is my backyard, the "Great American West," from the Big Horns to the land of the Mescalero, from Baja to the Chiricahuas, from those orca-laden waters off Vancouver Island to the oppressed flyways of the vanished California condor. My backyard extends like a well-muscled spine down the Canadian Rockies through the Gila, the Sierra Madres, and the enchanted mountains of the Mayans. A sinewy leg stretches down the sacred Andes, dips a toe in the icy waters of the Antarctic. Yes! But I also know the secrets of the Everglades, and like a ghost I prowl the long clearcut Eastern old-growth and disappearing Southern hardwoods.

And more than that! My backyard girdles the Earth at the equator like a warm hug made up of the damp rainforests of Australia and Guatemala, the Caribbean and Malaysia. It's all my backyard, cut-up and sold, spit-on and littered, fenced and drilled, entombed in asphalt until only the most astute can hear the pain-filled cries for help.

They're wrong! I'm not an "outside agitator." I'm an "inside agitator," working on the inside of this mechanical cancer. Fighting it bare-chested, exposed ...

I am at best a lens for the flow, striving to be clear. A loving balm that heals, yes -- but also a primitive, stone-chipped knife with which I carve at its evil heart. Defiantly cutting our way out into the light of the great outdoors -- the Mesozoic glow of the Future-Primeval.

#### inside agitator



by Don Alexander

*There needs to be Continent Congress so that occupants of North America can finally become inhabitants and find out where they are.*

*This time congress is a verb. Congress, come together. Come together with the continent. -- Peter Berg (1976)*

Starhawk, in her book, *Truth or Dare*, makes a distinction between *rebellion* -- merely responding to authority -- and *resistance* -- of being in it for the long haul. Based on my experience at the third North American Bioregional Congress (NABC III) held near Squamish, B.C. August 21-26, I believe that the bioregional movement is about the latter.

#### What is Bioregionalism?

The concept of bioregionalism was first popularized in the mid-70's by Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann of the *Planet Drum Foundation*, an organization founded in 1974 to "pursue research and publish information on the relationship between human culture and the natural processes of the planetary biosphere."<sup>2</sup>

That the idea was ready to be born is shown by the appearance, in 1975, of Ernest Callenbach's bioregional novel, *Ecotopia*, about an ecological nation in northern California, Oregon and Washington which secedes from the United States. A year later, David Haenke, now a bioregional author and activist, began making plans for holding an Ozark Community Congress, the first bioregional gathering of its kind.<sup>3</sup>

Kirkpatrick Sale offers perhaps the most concise definition of a bioregion as being "a place defined by its life forms, its topography and its biota, rather than by human dictates; a region governed by nature, not legislature."<sup>4</sup> Bioregionalists believe that nation-states and other administrative divisions are artificial constructs.<sup>5</sup> In contrast with modern industrial society which effectively alienates people from the land, bioregionalists advocate "living-in-place," which means

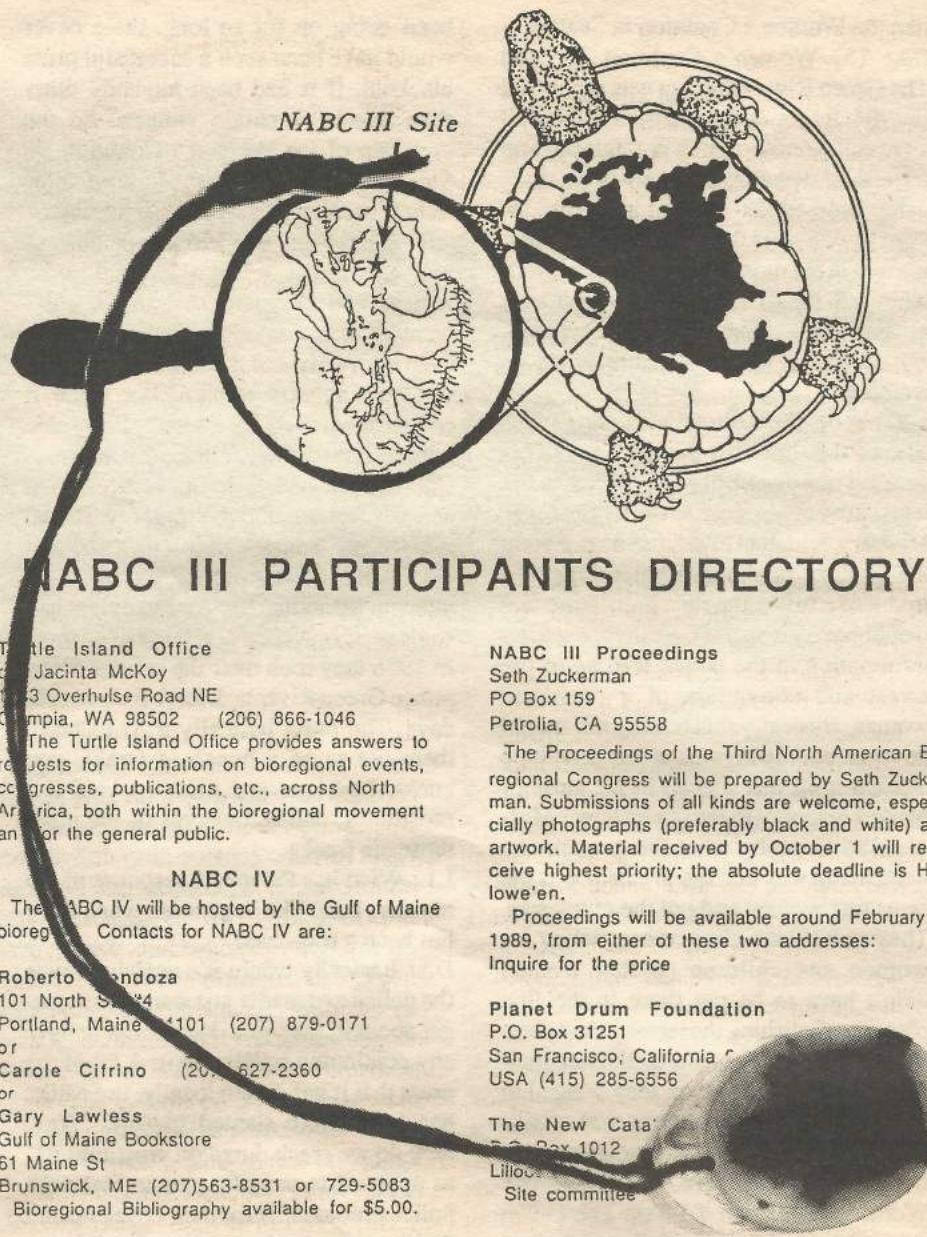
*following the necessities and pleasures of life as they are uniquely presented by a particular site, and evolving ways to ensure long-term occupancy of that site.*<sup>6</sup>

They argue that "Living-in-place is an age-old way of existence disrupted in some parts of the world a few millennia ago by the rise of exploitative civilization, and more generally during the past two centuries by the spread of industrial civilization."<sup>7</sup>

Bioregionalism, in essence, is the regional fulfillment of Aldo Leopold's "land ethic". As Stephanie Mills writes, "In a bioregion, the citizenry is more than human. Bioregionalism goes beyond ecology, in its enfranchisement of other life forms and land forms, and its respect for their destinies as intertwined with ours."<sup>8</sup> Thirty-two years before, Aldo Leopold had written that "The land ethic...enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land... In short, a land ethic changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it."<sup>9</sup>

The process of becoming an ecological citizen is described by Berg and Dasmann as "reinhabitation":

*Reinhabitation means learning to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation. It involves becoming native to a place through becoming*



## NABC III PARTICIPANTS DIRECTORY

### Turtle Island Office

Jacinta McKoy  
143 Overhulse Road NE  
Olympia, WA 98502 (206) 866-1046

The Turtle Island Office provides answers to requests for information on bioregional events, congresses, publications, etc., across North America, both within the bioregional movement and for the general public.

### NABC IV

The NABC IV will be hosted by the Gulf of Maine bioregion. Contacts for NABC IV are:

Roberto Mendoza  
101 North St. #4  
Portland, Maine 04101 (207) 879-0171

or  
Carole Cifriño (207) 627-2360

or  
Gary Lawless

Gulf of Maine Bookstore  
61 Maine St  
Brunswick, ME (207) 563-8531 or 729-5083  
Bioregional Bibliography available for \$5.00.

### NABC III Proceedings

Seth Zuckerman  
PO Box 159  
Petrolia, CA 95558

The Proceedings of the Third North American Bioregional Congress will be prepared by Seth Zuckerman. Submissions of all kinds are welcome, especially photographs (preferably black and white) and artwork. Material received by October 1 will receive highest priority; the absolute deadline is Haloween.

Proceedings will be available around February 1, 1989, from either of these two addresses: Inquire for the price

Planet Drum Foundation  
P.O. Box 31251  
San Francisco, California  
USA (415) 285-6556

The New Cata  
P.O. Box 1012  
Lillooet  
Site committee

which contains in embryo the outlines of a possible non-statist society. Local bioregionalists hold local congresses and coordinate outreach through regionally-focussed newsletters and journals. Every two years a *Continental Congress* is held, where bioregionalists from all over *Turtle Island* (the Seneca/bioregional term for North America), convene. At these congresses, people participate in the work groups of their choice. These committees -- bioregional education, "green cities", Native peoples and people of colour committee, and ecofeminism, etc. -- meet over the course of the conference and develop policy statements and action programmes to be submitted to the Congress as a whole.

On the last two days, plenary sessions are held where the statements are presented to the whole group, debated, amended and either adopted or rejected as Congress policy. These policy statements are not binding on any of the local groups. As they are arrived at by consensus, the expectation is that local groups will implement these recommendations to the best of their ability in a non-hierarchical and decentralized fashion. The Steering Council, which meets between gatherings, is self-selected -- that is, anyone can join, provided that half the membership consists of women, and one-third are people of colour. It only has power to carry out tasks delegated it by the Congress (fundraising, liaising with future site committees, etc.).

Despite inadequate representation at the Congress by people of colour, the bioregionalists have resolved to create the institutional and attitudinal framework for fully involving Native people and people of colour in bioregional activities and decision-making. This was achieved through the efforts of people of colour who were at the gathering, and those who supported them. While most of bioregionalism's theoreticians have been men, women were highly visible as "leaders" at the Congress, and the rule that women and men should alternate as speakers in plenary sessions was strongly reaffirmed. Gays and lesbians, and the "differently abled" do not as yet have a high profile in the movement.

### Overcoming Contradictions

In my humble opinion, the bioregional movement holds the potential to surmount many of the contradictions which have plagued other social movements, contradictions such as those between

--elite/"rank and file": While the role of certain individuals in developing the theory and practice of bioregionalism is acknowledged, a certain rough and ready egalitarianism prevails. Everyone chips in to do support work, and in discussions it is the message not the person relating it which is heeded most.

--personal/political: Most bioregionalists are involved, to one degree or another, in practicing a lifestyle consistent with their political beliefs. For instance, many bioregionalists are back-to-the-landers, and are involved in organic agriculture.

--theory/practice: Many bioregionalists, coming from rural areas, have practical skills. Even when they live in cities, they are involved in practical issues like how to stop abusing the water resources of the planet. Bioregionalists are not just theoreticians, they're practitioners.

--global/local: While concerned with global social and ecological issues, bioregionalists largely focus their work at the local level, where issues possess a greater immediacy for people and where

## WHEN CONGRESS IS A VERB

### bioregionalism in action

*aware of the particular ecological relationships that operate within and around it. It means understanding activities and evolving social behaviour that will enrich the life of that place, restore its life-supporting systems, and establish an ecologically and socially sustainable pattern of existence within it. Simply stated it involves becoming fully alive in and with a place. It involves applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter.*<sup>10</sup>

The belief in the existence of natural regions, and its advocacy of a practical land ethic, are two key aspects of bioregionalism. A third aspect pertains to the regard that bioregionalists hold for local and regional cultures which they see as the last hold-out against a "Global Monoculture":

*Global Monoculture dictates English lawns in the desert, orange juice in Siberia, and hamburgers in New Delhi. It overwhelms local cultures and "raises" them regardless of the effects on cultural coherency or capacities of local natural systems.*<sup>11</sup>

Stephanie Mills writes in relation to tourism that "the further we go in search of local color and character, of the texture that makes human existence rich, the further behind we leave the possibility of

discovering that texture in our own home places, and the more people upon whom we visit ourselves change to accommodate us."<sup>12</sup>

Bioregionalism, as a cultural movement, "celebrates the particular: the unique and often indescribable features of a place. It celebrates this through visual arts, music, drama and symbols which convey the *feeling* of place."<sup>13</sup> In particular, bioregionalists take inspiration from North American Native cultures which they see as expressing the spirit of specific natural regions.

Since its beginnings in the 1970's, the bioregional movement has picked up momentum. The *Ozark Area Community Congress* (OACC) was officially convened in 1980. Four years later, the Ozark bioregionalists were to play host to the first *North American Bioregional Congress* (NABC), representing over sixty groups continent-wide. This was followed, in 1986, by a second congress in northern Michigan. NABC III (the one I attended) took place near Vancouver in August of this year, and a fourth bioregional congress is scheduled for somewhere in the Gulf of Maine for 1990.

### The Bioregional Achievement

The bioregionalists have created an infrastructure based on anarchist principles

people can become politicized and increasingly aware of global/local connections.

*-political/cultural:* Bioregionalism creates an environment where people can be whole persons fulfilling their personal needs at the same time that they contribute to the transformation of economic and political structures. At the Congress, I felt that my whole being was involved: serving food, caring for children, barbecuing salmon, listening to presentations, partying, going for walks, speaking up at plenaries, intervening in conflicts, and facilitating workshops. I bonded with people on an emotional as well as intellectual level. My commitment to the movement stems as much from the people as from the ideas.

*-reform/revolution:* Bioregionalists engage in reformist work but with an analysis which points to the need to dismantle the "mega-machine". Even as they carry on battles to fight environmentally hazardous projects, or to support the just struggles of Native peoples, they are nurturing a commitment to and consciousness of the earth which transcends the artificial boundaries of nation-states, they are nurturing a belief in grassroots and ecological democracy which is incompatible with hierarchical political and economic structures. They are working within communities and regions to create a new consensus, rather than standing on the sidelines developing the be-all and end-all critique. Which is not to say that bioregionalists are anti-intellectual; on the contrary, bioregionalists take ideas and points of principle seriously.

What about the down side? As the accompanying article by David Haenke points out, there was a tendency for some to impose pagan pomp and circumstance on gathering participants as a whole. As Stephanie Mills wrote about the 1986 gathering,

*there were many moments when this observer felt that the invocations, convocations and ritualizations were contrived and subtly coercive of cynics, heretics, atheists and agnostics. Bioregionalism should not demand religious expression or participation....This is not to argue against the cause of coming to understand the Earth as a live and sacred being, and of paying symbolic honor to that holy life, but to comment that the borrowed and synthetic vestments we're wearing look awkward as yet, and likely will for the next few hundred years.*<sup>14</sup>

Stephanie suggests that we should leave "every bioregionalist's spiritual sense, or aversion thereto, as a matter of individual conscience."<sup>15</sup> The "contrived" character of some of the ceremonies is related to the question of bioregionalism's ability to reach out beyond its hippie and back-to-the-lander base. We would do well to learn from the modesty and lack of pretentiousness that characterizes many of the small town and rural dwellers who form a potential reservoir of support and participants.

#### Beyond Deep Ecology

I think this congress will be remembered as one where deep ecology lost much of the ground it gained at previous congresses. Deep ecology, which I define as a tendency to embrace an ecological paradigm which often ignores or belittles human problems or concerns, is being replaced by a new synthetic perspective - a radical ecology, if you will -- where human and natural systems are treated as both autonomous and interrelated. A concern with our own species need not contradict a desire to see human beings

resume their membership in the community of all species. Time and again -- in the Green Cities committee, in the workshop on social ecology/deep ecology and eco-feminism, in the session on "Racism, Sexism and the Land" -- it was emphasized that ecologists must take social issues seriously if the bioregional movement doesn't want to marginalize itself. Our focus may be regional, but our perspective must be global. As Green activist, Brian Tokar, has said: "Phenomena such as nuclear winter, acid rain, the greenhouse effect, and the thinning of the ozone layer make it clear that no partial solution can really sustain life, no matter how well-meaning and environmentally responsible it may seem." And this requires getting a clearer understanding of the contribution of capitalism to the global crisis.

I've talked about what I've thought about the congress; what did it feel like? It felt like the parts were attempting to assemble themselves into a whole. I made friends at the Bioregional Congress, I felt my work had value, and I feel that much more remains to be done. The Bioregional Congress did much to make me feel that I am working, not merely as an individual, but as part of a continent-wide resistance movement that is committed to radical change. And for that I owe it a great debt.

#### Footnotes

1. Peter Berg, "Amble Toward Continent Congress," *Raise the Stakes* Summer 1984: 9.
2. Peter Berg, "Bioregions," *Resurgence* May/June 1983: 19.
3. David Haenke, "A History of NABC," *North American Bioregional Congress Proceedings*, ed. Alexandra Hart (Forestville, CA: Hart Publishing, 1987) 38.
4. Kirkpatrick Sale, *Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1985) 43.
5. Peter Berg, "Growing A Life-Place Politics," *Raise the Stakes* Summer 1986: centrefold.
6. Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann, "Reinhabiting California," *Reinhabiting A Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California*, ed. Peter Berg (San Francisco: Planet Drum Foundation, 1978) 217.
7. Berg and Dasmann 217.
8. Stephanie Mills, "Planetary Passions: A Reverent Anarchy," *CoEvolution Quarterly* Winter 1981: 4.
9. Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," *The Subversive Science: Essays Toward An Ecology of Man*, ed. Paul Shepard and Daniel McKinley (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969) 403.
10. Berg and Dasmann 217-218.
11. Peter Berg, "Devolving Beyond Global Monoculture," *CoEvolution Quarterly* Winter 1981: 25.
12. Mills 5.
13. Editorial, "An Integrating Idea," *The New Catalyst* Jan.-Feb. 1986: 2.
14. Stephanie Mills, "Cook's Tour," *North American Bioregional Congress Proceedings*, ed. Alexandra Hart (Forestville, CA: Hart Publishing, 1987) 9.
15. Hart 9.

*Further information about the bioregional movement can be obtained by writing to: Turtle Island Office, c/o Jacinta McKoy, 1333 Overhulse Road NE, Olympia, WA 98502.*

*Proceedings of the 1988 Congress will be available in early February from either of the following addresses (inquire as to price):*

*Planet Drum Foundation, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, California, 94131, U.S.A.*

*The New Catalyst, P.O. Box 1012, Lillooet, British Columbia, V0K 1V0 Canada.*

*The New Catalyst is a fine publication in its own right. Subscriptions are \$12.00 for six issues in Canada (\$18.00 in Canadian funds for the U.S. and overseas). Single issues are \$2.25. The Planet Drum Foundation also publishes an excellent journal called *Raise the Stakes*. Copies are available for \$2.00 (U.S.).*



Robynski, '88

by David Haenke (from *NABC III Voice of the Turtle*)

If we take seriously what is brought forth and expressed in ritual, ceremony and spirituality, I believe that it's time to become much more discriminating, conscious, aware, careful, and consensual in the process and content of what we do with regard to these things in the bioregional and ecological movements.

At any given assembly or gathering we take care to consense with the whole group, or duly appointed representatives with approved process on decisions or actions that involve the whole group in almost all matters, *except ritual and ceremony*. We take care not to let one individual or group take charge of our direction, information, or energy without our fully informed agreement, *except with regard to ritual and ceremony*.

For example, there are people who, consciously or unconsciously, seize the power of the circle and the ceremonial group without asking. Many times they represent (whether you know it or not) a set of religious or spiritual beliefs, or the teaching or ceremonial expressions of a spiritual leader or guru, and its power or energy thus becomes present in the group. At one extreme of a problematic continuum that this behaviour is a part of, there is a great deal of autocratic and even fascistic power in cults and leader-dominated organizations.

When we have been too naive, trusting unquestioning and indiscriminate in these things, ritual, ceremony and twisted spiritual energies have been used by power-mongering people throughout human history.

Presently, there is in the Green movement much bashing of the ecology and spirituality connection, particularly from Murray Bookchin and people in his Social Ecology organization. Because there is historical precedent for it, we cannot dismiss questions raised in Bookchin's railings about the potential for eco-fascism and eco-fascistic spirituality. While much of this is indiscriminate, uninformed and self-serving, there are real issues which need to be addressed, and if they are not addressed clearly, it will lead to more confusion and counterproductive reactivity. There is no doubt that under the broad definition of the New Age and Counter-cultural movements there are some really strange and even disturbing ideas and practices which often go unquestioned because of the frequent lack of discrimination in those movements.

It is time to strongly exercise consciousness, discrimination and profound respect for the power of what we invoke as we live and work in the spirituality of the Earth. We must be very careful when we bring in things that have traditions not common to us all and be skeptical of all offers to bring in the spiritual energy of the East, or anywhere else not of Turtle Island, including those who offer from

the Native American tradition.

I believe that group use of special Native American spiritual practices (other than commonly used activities such as smudging) should only be accepted from Native Americans who we know to a reasonable degree are empowered by traditional elders and teachers or spiritual leaders to do so, or who are those elders and teachers themselves. Since there are large numbers of well-intentioned non-Native people using traditional Native practices with or without the consent of Native people we could open ourselves up to the possibility of being deceived and participating in yet another stealing and misuse of Native people's lifeways. We must be very aware and sensitive with regard to culturally embedded (particularly Native American) spiritual considerations and not offend people with deeply held beliefs which may not be compatible with what is being done in a given ceremonial activity.

I would like to see us disinclined to do too many things which tend to separate or isolate spirituality from everyday life, or from the ongoing work of our councils like NABC. Since the first of the Ozark Area Community Congresses in 1980, and the first two NABC's, there has been a spiritual committee, and I don't know why. I have always maintained that everything we do as bioregionalists and in our congresses and councils is spiritual. The NABC spiritual committees have never been able to get consensus on resolutions put to the Congress, even though those statements have been beautifully done, particularly NABC II's. It may be that what has been attempted is to define something that cannot or should not be defined or encapsulated in human meaning.

I hope we are careful of guru types, no matter what they profess. Gurus are quite often spiritual middlemen, spirit brokers, who take a major share off the top before peddling the scraps to the followers, from whom they gain the great and intoxicating power of adulation and surrender. True spiritual leaders make few or no claims, advertise little, if at all, and take little or nothing for what they give out. Some of the most obviously true and powerful spiritual leaders on this planet are not human at all but trees. I suggest them as the baseline for discriminating spiritual leadership.

I believe that the safest and yet most profound thing we can do, ritually and ceremonially, is be together, outside, in silence. Silence, where we listen to the natural world and breathe with each other and the wind. Somehow to get even a few minutes of silence at a gathering, which may last from one to seven days, can be one of the hardest things to do. It would be good for us to ask why it is so hard for us to be quiet, still our voices, and let the Earth do the sacred speaking and singing.

Recommended reading: "Good, Wild, Sacred" by Gary Snyder. □

On January 16, 1988 while reading the newspaper in a restaurant on the plaza in Puebla, Mexico, my Christmas holiday came abruptly to an end when I saw an article headlined "Honduran Army to Probe Rights Activist's Murder." The victim was Miguel Pavon, regional President of CODEH, the *Honduras Commission for Human Rights*. CODEH is the organization I was on my way to work with in a few days time, and Miguel Pavon was one of the people I was going to see. I had met him a couple of times in Costa Rica; the first time about six months before when we had discussed the photography workshop I was scheduled to do with his local CODEH committee in San Pedro Sula, Honduras' second largest city. The next time I saw him was in October, when he was testifying at the Inter-American Court on Human Rights in San Jose, where the government of Honduras was being tried for the disappearances of two Costa Ricans and two Hondurans sometime between 1981-82. This is a landmark human rights case and an historic event in Central America as it is the first trial in history in which a government is facing charges of conspiring to "disappear" suspected subversives -- which in almost every case means the victims have been illegally abducted and assassinated, and no remains are ever found.

Miguel Pavon had been the first witness before the court, giving the judges a chilling recent history of illegal detentions, kidnappings, disappearances, torture, and executions by Honduran military death squads. Dr. Ramon Custodio, national president of CODEH, said shortly after Pavon's death, that, "In fact, Miguel Pavon was the first witness against the Honduras state to prove that in Honduras there is practically no legal way to protect and promote human rights. And I would say he was rather eloquent because he was speaking out of experience."

The human rights trial in Costa Rica had received international coverage, and the testimony of Dr. Custodio and Miguel Pavon provided particularly damaging evidence against the government. Two days before Pavon's death, he and Custodio met in Tegucigalpa with members of the *Verification Commission* of the Esquipulas II Peace Treaty. At that meeting, CODEH presented a report stating that in Honduras 263 people had been assassinated in 1987 by the Honduran military, its security forces, and the contras.

The Mexican newspaper quoted CODEH vice-president Anibal Puerto as saying he thought Pavon was murdered in retaliation for his testimony against Honduras before the court. "The killers," he said, "who also murdered Pavon's companion, Moises Landaverde, were death squad members organized by the country's armed forces and trained in the United States." It was a terrible irony, therefore, to read that the president of Honduras, Jose Azcona, had ordered the Honduran army to find Miguel Pavon's assassins.

On January 5, one week before the

death of Pavon, a former Honduran Army sergeant, Jose Vilorio, was murdered by four gunmen at a crowded bus stop in Tegucigalpa. Vilorio's name had come up at the trial in October as a member of the military death squad, Battalion 3-16, and he was scheduled to appear as a witness in another session before the court on January 19, 1988. He was almost certainly killed by the same death squad he had once served with.

I arrived in Tegucigalpa five days after the death of Miguel Pavon, feeling for the first time in my work in Central America a vague sense of fear. I was relieved when someone from the CODEH office met me at the airport. We caught a cab and he indicated that we shouldn't talk about the assassination in the taxi -- my first reminder that I was back in a world where caution and suspicion are automatic with most people, and forgetting them can cost lives. Once at the CODEH office, with its black drape over the door and in the window, I heard the details of Miguel Pavon's death from his mourning and still-stunned colleagues.

On the evening of January 14, Miguel Pavon had given his friend and teaching colleague, Moises Landaverde, a ride home from a meeting. As they sat talking in front of Landaverde's house in a quiet residential neighbourhood, a man approached Pavon's side of the car and shot him three times at close range in the head and neck. The same bullets entered the body of Moises Landaverde, and both men died instantly. Witnesses reported seeing one or two men (there are conflicting stories) fleeing on a motorcycle. The two victims remained in the car for some time before the police arrived, and photos taken at the scene (which I later copied at the local newspaper office) testify to the merciless intrusion of the press in a family's privacy at its most tragic moment. They show the two bodies in the car, Pavon slumped over the steering wheel with his briefcase beside him on the seat, blood on his chest and legs; Landaverde on his right, with his head back, mouth and eyes open; a Landaverde family member holding Moises in his arms as he removed his body from the car; the two bodies side by side in a panel truck, Pavon's head covered with a cloth; Pavon's son beside the body at the morgue, appearing to be arguing with an official; Landaverde's wife beside her husband's body at the morgue, looking down on him with horror. All these terrible moments were photographed and splashed all over the papers in the following days. However, an assassination is a public occurrence, and it is important that political violence be reported and documented with photographs, no matter how painful for the family, no matter how sensationalized.

The police confiscated Pavon's briefcase, claiming they were looking for subversive material. In it, the newspaper later reported, were a copy of the Honduran Constitution, the New Testament, a novel and an article Pavon was writing for his weekly column in the San Pedro Sula daily, *El Tiempo*, "For the People." As well, according to a CODEH member,

there was a slip of paper with the number of the license plates of a motorcycle that had been following Pavon for several days. When the briefcase was returned to his family several days later, missing were his appointment book and the slip of paper.

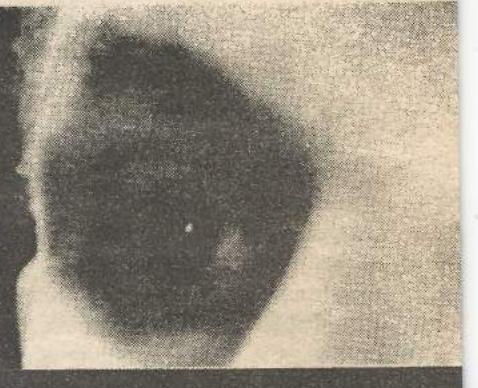
Miguel Angel Pavon, 45 years old, had been born into a poor campesino family in the south of Honduras. The oldest of nine children, he migrated with his family to San Pedro Sula, the industrial centre of the country, when he was in high school. After post-secondary training, he won a scholarship to Germany to study in his field of technical education. He had taught at the Honduras-Germany Technical Institute for many years, and had returned several times to Germany for further training. He was a long-time active member in a small political party, PINU (*Innovation and Unity Party*), and had recently been elected as an alternate deputy to the Honduran Congress.

But Miguel Pavon was not assassinated for any of this. He was killed for his tireless efforts on behalf of human rights in Honduras. "I don't remember when I first met Miguel Angel," said Dr. Custodio, "I only know that ever since he came to work on human rights he remained loyal to the cause. He was a man who had decided to do his work no matter what the dangers. The fact that he was carrying the Constitution in his briefcase at the very last minute defines him quite well I think. He was a strong believer in the Constitution and the law, and saw that the state of legality will be the only hope for the people of Honduras to reach democracy, social justice and peace."

Pavon was not unaware of the dangers he faced, particularly in the last two years, when he had developed a public profile as an outspoken human rights activist. His name, along with other popular leaders, had been on a "death list" that appeared in 1986 and, like others on the list -- several who have since died, he had received numerous death threats. Also in 1986, anti-Communist posters appeared on walls in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula with photographs of Dr. Custodio, Miguel Pavon and three trade union leaders, two of them women.

The poster headline says: **Com-patriots: These are the promoters of subversion in our country. They are terrorist criminals and the channel by which communism enters Honduras. Know Them!!** Under Miguel Pavon's picture is the following description: "Servant of Ramon Custodio in his anti-democratic and subversive struggle against our country", and "Parasite in his immunity as a deputy (to Congress) to discredit the people and government of Honduras." Within a short time after the appearance of this poster, a bomb destroyed the car and garage at the home of Leonor Meza, one of the trade union leaders, and damaged ten homes in the neighbourhood. By chance, no one was hurt, but after receiving further death threats, Leonor and her two children fled the country for exile in Costa Rica.

Late in 1987 Dr. Custodio got word of



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an assassination plot planned against him in the form of an arranged automobile accident. An international denunciation by CODEH derailed the plan, but Dr. Custodio has speculated that this public revelation of the death squad's plans caused the assassins to change their target from him to Miguel Pavon.

Ramon Custodio and various people from CODEH in Tegucigalpa went to San Pedro Sula the day after the assassinations for the funeral. Miguel Pavon's family is Mormon, and for this reason apparently they refused to allow an autopsy, and insisted the funeral be held immediately, despite requests by various groups with which Pavon had been associated that they be allowed to have the body for several days for homages or *velorios* (vigils). One of Pavon's daughters reportedly said to one group: "Why don't you leave us alone? You have taken so much of him in life."

When I arrived in Tegucigalpa on Tuesday, January 19, various events were being planned there and in San Pedro Sula to commemorate the deaths. Honduras is a small country and almost everyone knew who these men were, or knew their families, or had met and worked with them personally. Moises Landaverde, as I learned the next day when I attended an homage at the national theatre, had been an enormously popular teacher and theatre director. He was regional president of his secondary school teachers' union (COPEMH), and founder of the Honduran Community of Theatre.

At the national theatre in Tegucigalpa, theatre students, colleagues and friends had arranged an event in the foyer. Large

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banners with images of the two men's faces hung from ceiling to floor in front of a sort of altar with flowers and candles. Alongside these stood a Honduran flag. Through the day, people came to lay flowers and light candles in front of the display. From about 5:00 p.m. on, a woman mime, draped in black and holding a single calla lily, her face painted with a tragic mask, sat immobile in a chair for several hours through presentations of poetry, music and moving testimonials.

In the original plan for my visit, a couple of people from *CODEH* and myself were to make a tour of various small *CODEH* committees around the country, assess what (if any) photographic equipment they had, what they needed, and make a proposal that would provide the base for a technical equipment budget. The work of the regional committees is mainly to report on and document human rights violations, and for this they need cameras and tape recorders. But with the death of Pavon, no arrangements had been made for this trip other than that a jeep was reserved from another agency for our use. To take advantage of the transportation and my being there, we decided to go ahead with the tour of the local committees, but make our purpose more general. We would get a sense of the respective human rights situations of their region, ask them what resources they needed to do their work, and investigate the possibility of mounting radio programs on human rights at local stations. We decided as well that the purpose of the trip could take on another dimension -- we would begin collecting material for a project to document the life of Miguel

Pavon.

So finally it was arranged that three other people and myself would go: the *CODEH* photographer, the education coordinator, and a driver. We planned to leave early on a Saturday morning, four days after my arrival. On that day, just after dawn, walking down the hill from the house where I was staying to the *CODEH* office in the centre of the city, I was shocked to see how many people were sleeping on the streets. Although I had become accustomed to seeing many beggars of all ages on the streets during the day, I was surprised to see how many people actually slept and lived on the streets. At this early hour they were beginning to stir on their cardboard and rag beds, getting ready for another day of begging or hustling to survive. The slightly more fortunate poor live in the thousands of shacks that cover the hills surrounding Tegucigalpa. As they have no municipal services, their sewage and waste water runs into the rivers and streams that wind through the city, and the smell of open sewers running alongside the streets is overwhelming. Also, of course, the hundreds of people who live on the streets have no facilities, so they must use the alleys and gutters as their latrines. The overall impression is one of a desperately poor people crowding into a city which has no capacity to accommodate them. An old story.

We left the city driving to the north, and within thirty minutes were in the beautiful pine forests that cover the mountain range which divides Honduras into two parts: the high central plateau dominated by Tegucigalpa, the capital, and the tropical north coast dominated by San Pedro Sula, the industrial and money centre of the country. Five hours later, entering the outskirts of San Pedro Sula, we stopped for a few minutes at the cemetery where Pavon's burial had taken place a week before. His gravesite was muddy and marked only by his name written crookedly on a card stuck in a metal holder. Landaverde's grave lay nearby, looking the same. We stood for a few minutes staring at the grave -- blank space that represented someone who had existed a mere ten days before -- took a couple of pictures and left. (Within a week or two there would be an order for the exhumation of the bodies to extract the bullets in a belated effort to identify the calibre gun that had been used in the assassinations.)

Within a kilometre or two of the cemetery is the *Honduras-Germany Institute*, the technical school where Pavon had taught. Although it was the summer vacation we stopped by to see if we could talk to anyone. The only person there was the guard at the gate, who had a pistol jammed in his back pocket, and told us that he had been given strict instructions not to let anyone but school personnel in. When we identified ourselves as from *CODEH*, however, he allowed us to go in and wander around and take a few pictures. A black crepe bow over the doorway to Pavon's office was the only notice we could find that one of the Institute's teachers would not be returning when

classes began again a few weeks later.

We wanted to talk to Pavon's family, but since none of us knew them personally, we felt we couldn't go directly to the Pavon home. So we stopped by the office of PINU, and there found a *CODEH* and PINU colleague of Pavon's who agreed to accompany us. The Pavon family lives on the outskirts of San Pedro Sula in a community which was created some twenty years ago as a cooperative housing project for trade unionists. Pavon and his wife were among the first to move there, and their four children have been raised there. The houses are modest, their patios and yards surrounded by trees. It was a quiet Saturday afternoon, and Pavon's wife, children, mother and sister were all there. They greeted us very graciously and all but the children were willing to talk to us with a tape recorder going.

His wife introduced herself on the tape as "Carlota Savala, now widow of Miguel Pavon," and gave the names of their three daughters and one son. The oldest has just graduated from teachers' college, the others are in high school. She related how she and Miguel had met as high school students in San Pedro Sula, and married in 1962.

We asked her to describe her husband. "He was a very humanitarian and sensitive man," she said, "always worried about the well being of his fellow man. He was angered when he saw injustice, and for this he worked hard on the defense of human rights. Many times I complained to him that he was not at home enough with me and the children. He would leave at nine in the morning and often didn't come home until ten or eleven at night. He was either at the PINU office, the school, or doing *CODEH* work. But he always answered by saying that we -- the family -- have everything, and that his work was for people who have great needs. We were a little worried about his safety because of the situation here with respect to human rights, and especially after the death of Herbert Anaya (president of the human rights commission in El Salvador, assassinated in October 1987), but Miguel always said they would never touch him because he was a deputy to Congress.

"On the night before his death, Wednesday, he came home from being away a week in Tegucigalpa and the south. He hadn't been with us much at home lately, and he usually ate dinner while watching the news on television. But that last night he came home at 7:30, ate dinner in the kitchen and sat at the table for two hours talking, telling us how it had gone in the south. He left on Thursday morning at 9:30. He said 'I'm going' and he left. He dropped off our daughter near the house at 5:00 in the afternoon and after that returned to the PINU office.

"We heard about it (the assassination) from our neighbours. My oldest daughter and I were at a church meeting in the neighbourhood, taking a course in home gardening, so I was only a block away from home. The other children were in the house. We left the meeting about 8:15 p.m. and met two of my children in the

street. They looked strange and I asked 'what happened?' and they said a neighbour had told them Miguel had had an accident and I asked if it was with the car and they said no. We went to the house of his older brother, four blocks from here, and when we got there the house was full of people and they told me that Miguel had been assassinated. Then we went to the place where it had happened, and saw it."

Pavon's mother: "I have no complaints about my oldest son. He was an example to all men."

We met that night with the members of the small San Pedro Sula *CODEH* committee, who were extremely demoralized by Pavon's death. One of them said, "In San Pedro Sula, Miguel was *CODEH*." They talked about the difficulties of getting reorganized, and lamented the lack of resources.

We left the next morning for a visit to *CODEH* committees in La Ceiba Sonaguera, Tocoa, Sava and Olanchito, which required making a three-day circular drive in the northwest section of Honduras. This is a rich agricultural zone which was once the sole domain of Standard Fruit and United Fruit, the American multinational companies which have dominated Honduran economic (and some say political) life since the 19th century. Once they were forced to abandon their banana plantations after the devastation of Hurricane Fifi in 1974, the area became a highly conflictive centre of agrarian reform. The Catholic clergy serving this part of the country has played an important role supporting the campesinos in their legal demands for land (Honduras has had land reform laws on the books since 1962), but for this they are seen by the Honduran state security forces as agents of subversion. We made a brief stop in a little town called Sonaguera. Neither the local *CODEH* committee president nor the priest, Father John MacDonald, were there, but I recognized the name of the priest from my visit in Honduras two years ago. In 1986 Father Macdonald was kidnapped by the military, held and interrogated for several days before being released. The reason was his work with the campesinos. Another Jesuit priest working in the region told us that when he came back into the country in 1986 from a visit home to Spain, he was met by authorities at the airport and told that they could not guarantee his life for more than 24 hours if he chose to come back into the country. Both men continue to work in the region.

The *CODEH* local committees in these small rural communities range from fairly well organized groups of ten or more people which meet every month or so, to committees of one or two designated individuals who represent *CODEH* and try to carry on its work singlehandedly. The priest in Tocoa told us that there had been an active *CODEH* committee there a couple of years ago, with meetings of seventy people every fifteen days and educational workshops of one hundred people, but in 1986 a wave of repression by the military which included kidnap-

pings and executions, had badly disorganized and intimidated the people of the area. He said that even newsletters from the church were considered subversive and had been confiscated in campesino homes. When we asked about the possibility of a radio program he said, effectively, forget it. Even the church has a hard time broadcasting programs if they contain anything that is considered controversial.

For most committees, their only resource is a commitment to the concept of human rights laid out in the Constitution. Their work is to teach Hondurans their human rights and how to defend them, and to document violations in their zones. Most committees lack even regular meeting places, using space in churches and schools and private homes. The best equipped committee has a desk and filing cabinet in borrowed space in a union office. Most committees simply have file folders with a sheaf of papers that represent their work. Certainly none have cameras or tape recorders, basic equipment for gathering evidence of violations. One committee coordinator, a campesino who is without work, said that he often didn't even have the money to call the national office to report a violation since the telephone company in his area had changed the system and it was impossible to make collect calls from his village.

By Tuesday afternoon we were back in San Pedro Sula to participate in a mass and march to commemorate Pavon and Landaverde. It was the first organized public response to mark the deaths since the funeral, and thousands of people including members of trade unions and professional groups, students, PINU members, and other organizations gathered at the church for a mass followed by a march of several miles to the centre of the city. On the steps of the main cathedral speakers from the organizations eulogized Pavon and Landaverde, and expressed their outrage that in Honduras human life could be taken with impunity by the agents of state security -- the military.

Along the route of the march I

photographed the graffiti that was being sprayed on walls by a group of young people. Gringos and Contras Out! No to Military Occupation! For Human Rights...; Pavon and Moises Are Present!

Nearly all the speakers at the rally mention the United States military presence in Honduras, which has coincided with a dramatic rise in human rights abuses. While the people of Honduras have always suffered some degree of repression, no systematic policy of political violence existed before 1980. From 1981 to 1984, however, there were 218 political assassinations, 110 disappearances and 1,947 illegal detentions, all at the hands of military death squads and state security forces. Between 1980 and 1986, military aid to Honduras increased sixteenfold -- from \$4 million to \$60 million. During this time, over 40,000 US troops were stationed or trained in the country, and along with the Honduran military they built or improved eleven airstrips, two radar stations, several base camps and training facilities, helicopter refueling pads, and a large-scale command and logistics centre at Palmerola Air Base, the permanent centre of US military operations in Honduras. During this same period the Nicaraguan rebel forces, the contras, set up their base of operations along the southern border of the country.

With the sponsorship and financial aid of the US, Honduras became a military garrison, and the consequent effect on human rights has been devastating. "I have never seen a case in which the United States Government is so deeply linked to the human rights abuses of a government as in Honduras," said Aryeh Neier, vice chairman of Americas Watch, the New York-based human rights group.

Perhaps the most horrifying revelations at the Inter-American Court trial in October came from Florencio Caballero, an ex-Army sergeant and member of the notorious death squad Battalion, 3-16. Now living in Canada under special protection as a political exile, he was brought to San Jose under strict security measures and testified for two riveting days. He recounted how as a young

recruit in the Honduran army, he was among 25 soldiers who were flown out of Honduras at night and taken to an unidentified military base in the United States, where they received several weeks' training. There were no entry procedures into the US, and the Hondurans were never told where they were. Caballero thinks they were in Texas, he said, because the TV programs they received on the base were from a Houston station. The Hondurans were kept separate from the regular base population, but were trained by US government and military personnel. Caballero testified that he was trained by the CIA in interrogation techniques. Although he didn't claim there was death squad training per se, he described how he and his fellow soldiers were taught skills that made them able members of Battalion 3-16 once back in Honduras. He explained to the horrified audience of the court how the death squads systematically and illegally detained or kidnapped anyone suspected of being a "subversive", which generally meant they worked with campesinos or trade unions. Those detained were kept in clandestine jails and subjected to interrogation, torture and almost certain execution. Caballero described how the functions of interrogator, torturer and executioner were kept strictly separate, and though he witnessed scenes of torture and execution, he insisted that he never personally participated in these acts. The bodies were disposed of in ways that insured no identifiable remains would ever be discovered. Caballero described how some victims were chopped up by machetes and parts of their bodies strewn along highways. Others were buried in the foundations of buildings under construction or -- a favourite method, he said -- was to execute and bury victims on farms owned by members of the military. Before the court he identified several of the military men whose farms had been used as execution and burial grounds. He testified that during the years 1981-84, nearly every person detained illegally by the military was executed. One man he personally interrogated before he was executed in 1983 was an American priest,

James Carney. It was this same priest, known as Father Guadalupe, who years earlier had organized the first human rights committee in Honduras, later to become CODEH.

One notable exception in that she survived, was Ines Murillo, another witness before the court. In her testimony which took place over the course of a day, she corroborated Caballero's stories with her own horrifying experience. She had been picked up in San Pedro Sula in March 1983 by several armed men in civilian dress. A 24-year old law graduate, she had been working as an advisor to campesino and labour groups. Taken to a clandestine jail within the city -- the basement of a private house -- she was held for eighty days, during which time she was kept totally naked, interrogated, brutally tortured, drugged and raped. In describing this time she said, "I thought about killing myself, and asked them to kill me." For the first ten days she refused to give them her name, and for this alone she was tortured. She knew she was being held by the military, she said, from the radio communications she could sometimes hear. She told the court that at one point during her stay in the clandestine jail, she was sure there was an American present, as she could hear him talking in English-accented Spanish. According to a *New York Times* article, Ines was able to identify an American CIA agent who had been present during an interrogation session. After she made a public identification of this man, he was quickly moved out of Honduras by the U.S. government.

Pressure brought against the Honduran government from her father, a lawyer and ex-military man, and from the West German government (her mother is West German by birth and Ines holds dual citizenship), finally forced her captors to produce her. That is, they presented her to the press after feeding her well for several days and clothing her for the first time since her kidnapping. Her case was then "legalized" -- meaning a charge of illegal possession of a firearm was trumped up against her -- and she was held in official jails for 13 months before being released through an extralegal agreement that she leave the country as a German citizen.

During the course of her testimony, Ines stopped several times to gain control of her emotions. By the end, there were few dry eyes in the court. Listening to her account were the families of Yolanda Solis and Francisco Fairen, two young Costa Ricans who disappeared in Honduras in December 1981 while on their way to Mexico for a Christmas holiday. Listening was the wife of Saul Godinez, Honduran primary school teacher who disappeared in July 1982. Listening was the sister of Honduran Manfredo Valasquez, student leader and father of four children, who disappeared in September 1981. While the case formally deals with only these four persons, it is on the behalf of hundreds of other Hondurans who have disappeared, been kidnapped or been executed in the past eight years that this historic case is before the court. The trial is of great symbolic significance because it is the first formal effort of the *Organization of American States* to condemn the practices of military death squads in Latin America. While a team of lawyers representing the Honduran government was present throughout the proceedings, they have called no witnesses. Their defense rests on the contention that not all legal means within Honduras have been used to try to locate the missing persons. They have also tried to discredit witnesses like Caballero, calling him a traitor to his



country and thereby unreliable.

The court reconvened in January, two weeks after the death of Miguel Pavon and at that time three Honduran army officers whose names had arisen during the earlier testimony were summoned to appear. The Honduran government insisted that the three men were at risk in coming to San Jose to testify, and demanded that their testimony be heard in a secret location. The Court acceded, and consequently little about the content of their testimony is publicly known.

According to the *New York Times*, however, one of the army officers who appeared before the court was Alexander Hernandez, well known to the U.S. Embassy in Honduras as the former commander of the 3-16 Battalion army death squads. While I was in Honduras in January, Hernandez was promoted to Lt. Colonel by President Azcona. Another witness called to testify before the court in the closed session in January was the brother of the commander of the Honduran army, L. Marco Tilio Regaldo. In earlier testimony, Ines Murillo claimed that she heard this man called by name at one of the torture sessions.

Despite all this evidence now before the court, and the fact that the U.S. government and CIA have known about the death squads for years, the Reagan administration maintains that Honduras has an acceptable human rights record. It has made no denunciation of the recent assassinations, nor any acknowledgement of the escalating number of human rights abuses. Turning a blind eye to the obvious allows the administration to continue approving financial and material aid to the Honduran police and military, and to maintain a strong U.S. military presence in the area. And maintaining a military foothold in Central America appears to be of paramount importance to the U.S., despite the devastation it causes the "host" countries. As I write this, 3200 recently deployed U.S. troops are sitting at Palmerola Air Force Base in Honduras. They are there, apparently, in response to a direct request from President Azcona to Reagan that they be sent because the Sandinistas were attacking contra camps in Honduras near the Nicaraguan border. Never mind that Honduras denies there are contra camps in Honduras. Meanwhile, today's newspaper (March 25) announces that the Sandinista government and representatives of the contra forces have signed an agreement to effect a complete cease fire within 60 days. In an accompanying article, Costa Rican President Arias criticizes the presence of U.S. troops in Honduras, saying "there was never any justification for sending them."

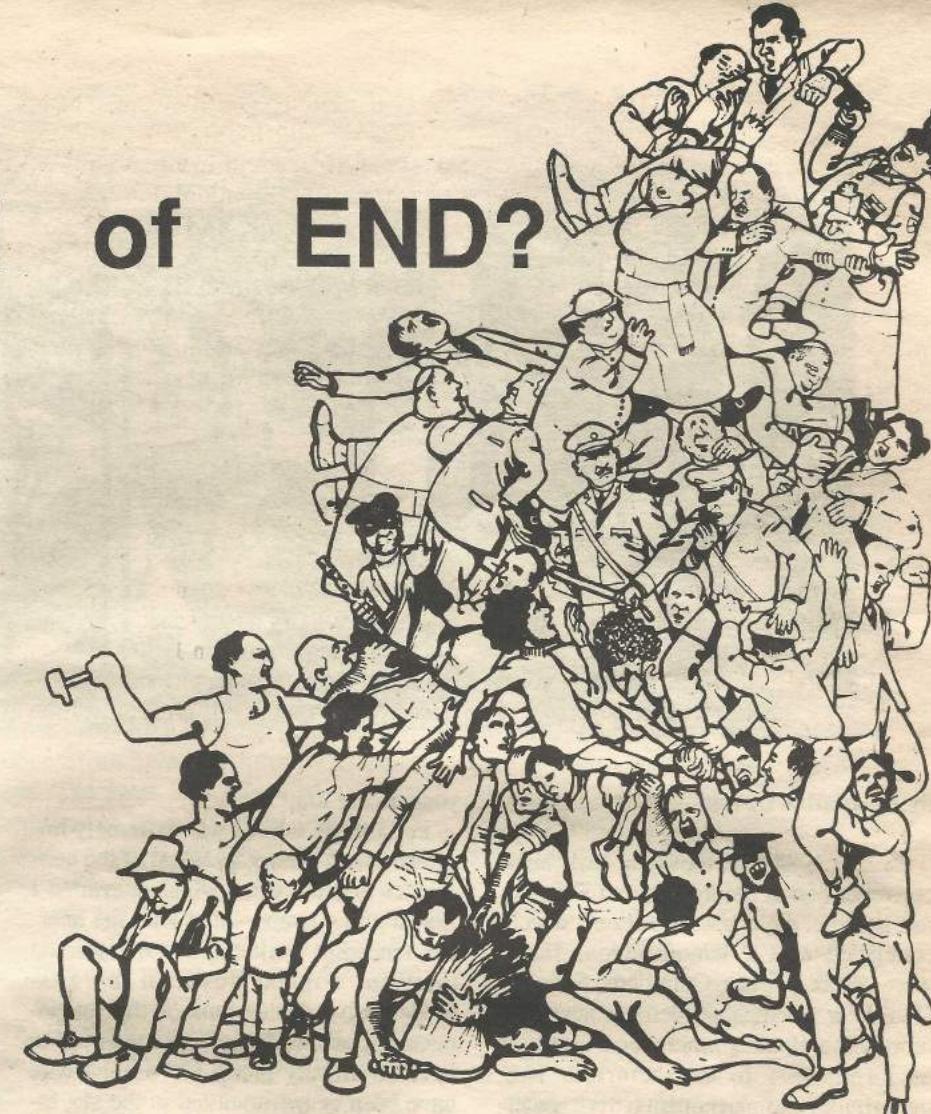
I leave the last word to Elvia Alvarado, a Honduran peasant woman:

*I used to feel hatred toward the gringo soldiers. Why should they be in our country, with all their guns and all their dollars, making life even more difficult for us? But now I know that these poor gringos are just ignorant; they really don't know why they're here or what this struggle is all about. I have friends who've talked to some of them, and they say that these guys don't know anything about Central America. They've just been sent here by their government. So it's really not their fault; it's the fault of the people who sent them here.*<sup>1</sup> □

#### Footnotes

1. *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo: A Honduran Woman Speaks from the Heart*, translated and edited by Medea Benjamin (Food First, Institute for Food and Development Policy, 145 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, 1987).

## The End of END?



by Bruce Allen

*Europe's foremost peace organization is standing at the crossroads. If it refuses to get off the fence, it risks being superceded by a new organization that is firmly committed to "detente from below."*

A little less than a year ago, I wrote those words. The 6th European Nuclear Disarmament (END) Convention in Coventry, England had ended just weeks before and there was good reason to think END was at the crossroads. A major internal rift had appeared at the Coventry Convention leading to the formation of an "Interim Committee". The purpose of this committee was to ostensibly set things right concerning the appropriate relationship between the Western peace movement and our natural partners, the independent movements in the East. (See "END at the Crossroads", KIO #21.) Its emergence was accompanied by serious discussion about a new initiative which would fully involve the East block independents and be in tune with the latest developments in the East-West political situation. Indeed, it looked like the new committee might supercede END and its cumbersome Liaison Committee.

This discussion turned out to be, as one West German Green wryly remarked at this year's END Convention in Lund, Sweden, "hot air". The formation of the Interim Committee proved next to worthless insofar as it did nothing but briefly terrify the social democratic dinosaurs on the Liaison Committee. Worst of all, some of those who had been so vocal in calling for change and in recognizing that the peace movement of 1987 was not the peace movement of 1979-1983 fell far short of matching their insightful words with meaningful deeds precisely when such deeds would have been most timely. At most, one might cite one tangible result from this stillborn challenge to the END status quo. The END Liaison Committee did go on to formally commit itself to refuse to invite the government-manipulated official East bloc peace committees to the 1988 END Convention unless these committees came along with independent activists from their respective countries.

Yet even this achievement was largely

lost. END's Liaison Committee, in a display of cowardice, let the official *Soviet Peace Council* come to this year's convention in Lund, despite the refusal of the Soviet authorities to grant visas to any independent peace activists so that they could attend. (The *Trust Group* and a substantial number of participants at the convention formally protested in response.) Fortunately for END this act of capitulation was overshadowed by a gift from the Jaruzelski regime in Poland. At the very last moment it granted visas to Solidarnosc leaders Jacek Kuron and Janusz Onyszkiewicz so they could attend. Their presence, and especially Kuron's, had an electrifying effect on the Lund convention and gave it truly historical significance insofar as the assembly provided the opportunity for a long overdue meeting between prominent representatives of the two most powerful social movements to have appeared in Europe in this generation.

Were it not for a forceful reminder from Jacek Kuron himself, many in attendance would have forgotten about the other Poles, including *Freedom and Peace* spokesperson Jacek Czaputowicz who were prevented from attending by the same Jaruzelski regime which was letting Kuron out of Poland for the first time in his life. No Czech or East German independents were allowed to come either. However, the situation was different with respect to them, since the official Czech and East German peace committees boycotted the convention in a characteristic display of loyalty to their respective neo-Stalinist governments. The latter are intensely hostile to END.

Despite these things, Jacek Kuron's prominent and enthusiastic participation in the Lund Convention was assurance enough that this event would be qualitatively better than last year's episode in Coventry. At the END convention in Coventry the East bloc independents were so marginalized that two of their best known exiled spokespersons joked at one point about proposing that END join the Stalinist and pro-Soviet *World Peace Council*. But Kuron's political significance was such that he could not be sidelined by those on the Liaison Committee who for all practical purposes don't give a damn what happens to the East bloc independents.

Similar dynamics were at work with respect to the Hungarian presence at the convention in Lund. The continued presence of the official *Hungarian Peace Council* on the END Liaison Committee did facilitate the welcome presence of a large contingent of activists from Hungary's burgeoning independent political scene. But their considerable presence effectively averted any serious discussion or even thought about the political implications of having a body directly backed by a Warsaw Pact state actively participating in the Liaison Committee of a campaign involving the foremost organizations of the European peace movement.

The 1988 END Convention will consequently be viewed in retrospect as having been generally consistent with past conventions. However, it is now more painfully apparent than ever that the European Nuclear Disarmament campaign is ineffectually drifting with the flow of events in Europe and beyond instead of either affecting them or their direction in any meaningful way. Simply stated, END cannot go on as it is much longer. If it does END will become irrelevant. Its role in facilitating the vital convergence between the increasingly historic movements for change in the East and the Western peace movement will, accordingly, become a subject for historical debate.

A tragedy is thus unfolding insofar as there is not at present a sufficiently credible formation which is capable of picking up where END will leave off. Clearly then, the task before those of us who appreciate how important the East-West dynamic is and who are prepared to turn our words into deeds, is to consciously focus on developing a host of alternatives outside the context of END which are at one and the same time as complementary and consistent with each other as possible.

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by Alexandra Devon

In July 1988, one thousand anarchists converged on or emerged out of Toronto for a three day "unconvention" which concluded with a demonstration. There were punks, pagans, Christians, Spanish Civil War veterans, academics, anarcha-feminists and many others too numerous or impossible to characterize. The majority of the participants were under the age of thirty. From one person, I was told that the word was out to youth in the U.S. that Toronto was the place to be for this July weekend. And come they did in numbers that exceeded the expectations of many of us. The first night, before the unconvention started, I was at a party held at a house of one of the organizers. The backyard was filled with at least a dozen tents. People were cooperatively setting up camp in the limited space available.

Over the next three days, everyone was provided with wonderful vegan food, shelter and workshops -- at no cost. In the words of a Christian anarchist who publishes a journal called *The Digger*, "The Anarchist Survival Gathering proved to me beyond a shadow of a doubt that big, complicated things can be done without hierarchy or bosses. Some eight hundred people came together from a dozen countries, and, for four days, ran a nursery, a food service for all, 57 seminars in dozens of rooms in two buildings, showed movies, taught skills, and *all without one boss, with no chain of command and with no pay! Anarchy does work!*"

Buckets were put out at meal times for those who could contribute. Two benefit concerts were held on Saturday night. Hard core was featured at one with groups like *MDC* and *Mourning Sickness*. Not far away was another venue featuring the *Layabouts*, *Fifth Column* and *Imagine*. These benefit concerts helped to ensure that the conference costs were covered. Rumour has it that there was actually a surplus at the end of the conference, which is a remarkable feat considering what was provided.

As for the substance of the workshops, they covered topics ranging from technology (apparently a hot topic for many anarchists), national liberation movements, anarcha-feminism, Native philosophies, youth liberation, squatting, disability rights and others. There were affinity groups for anarchists who were queer, Jewish, middle-aged, Christians, people of colour and ex-Leninists, to name a few.

For many this was a peak experience. To be with so many others who shared one's ideals and were working to realize them was exciting. One veteran of the Spanish Civil War said to me in the hubbub between workshops, "This will add

years to my life."

For myself, while I was extremely impressed with the organization of the conference and the spirit which prevailed I was slightly disappointed with the anarcha-feminism workshops. In my opinion they got bogged down in moralistic/defensive discussions of the sex industry. It seemed to point out the need to have an affinity group for women who have been or are involved in the sex industry, as well as having a discussion group of this issue on the agenda. As it was, the discussion of anarcha-feminism in general was limited to that one topic, despite the efforts of some to move on to other subjects.

This was very much an activists' conference, dealing with ideology only as it served strategy. There were no workshops on Proudhon, Goldman, or Kropotkin, although I was interested to see in some fanzine-type of anarchist literature that readers were encouraged to check out Kropotkin at their local public library. The emphasis was very much on the here and now, unlike many conferences which get mired in the there and then. However, there was not a lot of opportunity for intergenerational exchange. As a people of colour committee at another conference I was at this summer stressed, white people (and many of the conference participants were) need to know their own history and connect with their elders too. As the publisher of *Factsheet Five*, Mike Gunderloy, said after attending the middle-aged anarchist workshop, "One of the disturbing things is that once you give up on 'Revolution NOW!', you cease to be listened to. There was more than 500 years of anarchist experience in the room with me, a great resource that we're not making much use of."

Sunday was reserved for networking in the park. Three noteworthy outcomes of this were the formation of an anti-racist network, a prisoner support group, and a disability rights network. The latter group made the very astute comment that if we are to take the IWW slogan ("An injury to one is an injury to all") to heart, then the events must be made accessible to people who are differently-abled, by having signing available for the hearing-impaired and wheel-chair accessibility for the various events.

The Monday following the three days of workshops and festivities, the "day of action," was perhaps the most controversial event of the unconvention. After shunning the anxious media for the previous three days, the participants and the police provided the press and television with the "photo opportunity" of the decade which included burning flags, blood, violence, and nudity. It was the spectacle they had been waiting for. The various police forces, too, who had had to

content themselves with giving tickets for minor traffic violations, like jay-walking, for three days were able to break loose in a frenzy of violence which brought to mind the brutal treatment of demonstrators in Chicago at the 1968 Democratic Convention. As for the anarchists' part in the melee, there is much disagreement as to exactly what happened even among those who attended (for eyewitness accounts of the demonstration and its aftermath, see below, the Summer 1988 edition of the *Fifth Estate*, and the July 15-September 14 edition of the *Torch*). Some blamed the violence on the cops; others felt that the anarchists bore equal responsibility.

Beyond the questions of what went on at this particular demonstration is the question of whether such an event should be a ritual part of each gathering. This is a question which was raised in the early planning stages of this conference. Obviously a significant number of the activists who attended felt that such an event is worthwhile, as the numbers (approximately 300) testify. But what about those who didn't attend either the conference or the event itself? The suggestion in the conference literature that participants bring bail money was enough to put off some who had expressed interest in attending. There were also those at the gathering who raised objections. These objections were not always to such demonstrations per se, nor were they coming solely (or even mainly) from pacifists, as objections came even from those who had taken part in revolutionary wars. Because of a lack of concern with the objections being raised, and a majority rule policy, the demonstration went ahead anyway.

As for what the demonstration actually demonstrated, there are a wide range of interpretations. For some who viewed it positively, it was a chance to show other marginalized and oppressed people the revolutionary zeal of anarchism. For those who viewed it negatively, they felt it helped cement the link in people's minds between anarchism and chaos and violence.

How these differences of opinion are resolved will be very significant. The future conferences will either effectively exclude the participation of those who disagree with the tactics of "death wish demos", or else some sort of resolution will be found. The philosophical differences seem to run deep, and more and more people seem to be expressing dissatisfaction with the tactic of confrontational demos, although to date these people have been effectively marginalized. A split in the movement could well be in the offing. For those of us who are working toward a society which recognizes the wisdom of many voices, and

who are looking for a politics which reflects this, this is an important juncture.

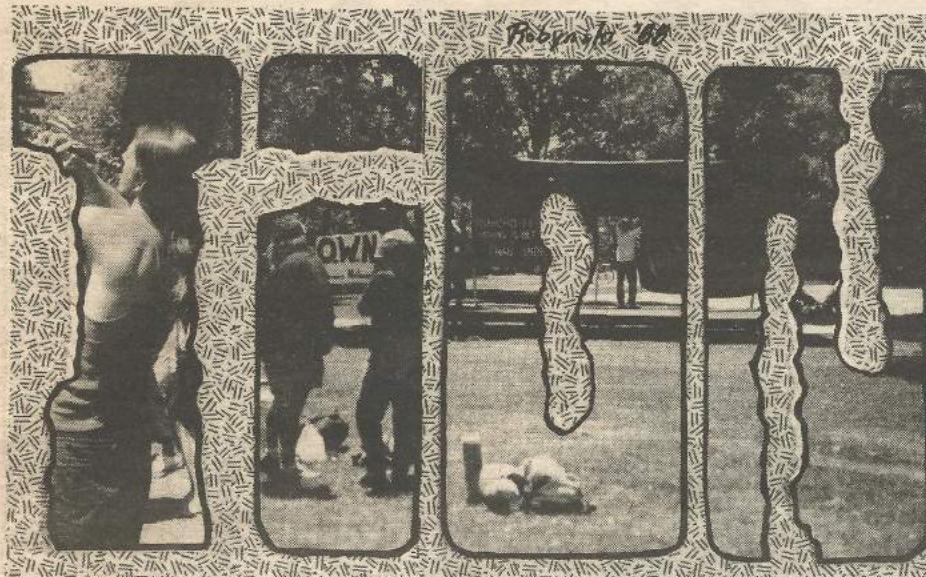
The following excerpts are some post-gathering reflections, dealing with the demonstration.

"After the events of the last three years, how can anyone still think that demonstrations are a good idea? Attacking armed cops in a strange city in the company of people you don't know, after a planning session held in the presence of police and reporters, is not revolutionary. It's just plain stupid. There are enough crazies hanging around these gatherings to make it completely impossible to hold a non-violent action, so any action is going to turn into a violent confrontation, getting people hurt and arrested, and draining the resources of our network. The militant ringleaders strike me as completely irresponsible, especially for suckering in relatively innocent people who weren't sure that things would turn ugly.

*We do not need any more deathwish demonstrations!* Suicide will not advance our cause. I am not a pacifist or a person opposed to all demonstrations. There are good reasons to demonstrate in the proper circumstances. These circumstances do not exist at our gatherings." from *Mike Gunderloy Anarchnotes #4, 6 Arizona Avenue, Renssalaer, New York 12144-4502*

"Back at the jail we were all put into another holding cell. Dinner was soon brought in -- more ham and cheese sandwiches. I couldn't eat due to nausea from the paddy wagon, but I decided to save mine and eat it in my cell later.

Soon they came and got me. They took away my sandwich. I asked if maybe I could get a toothbrush or a pillow or take a shower, or make a phone call. They growled that I could ask these questions to the *gentleman* in charge of the Segregation Unit (the punishment area where we were being kept). They pushed me through a door in the Seg unit, and there was a woman standing there. She wasn't a *gentleman*, but did seem to be in charge. As the other two guards pushed me through the doorway, I turned to ask her some of my questions. She immediately grabbed my shoulders and pushed me around, screaming, "Turn around!" I didn't move my hands, but I tried to keep my body standing the way it was, for some reason. As soon as I offered this tiny bit of resistance, all three of them jumped on me, pinning my arms painfully behind my back, and screaming various things. This evidently wasn't good enough even though I was by now totally immobilized, so they called over a male guard who yanked my hair, jerking my head down forward so that I was bent



over. I was forced to walk for a while in this position, unable to see where I was going, and feeling that my arm was about to break.

The four of them pushed me into a cell, and told me to take my clothes off. The man stood outside the cell at this point. I said they weren't supposed to do strip searches with a man present. They screamed that they could do whatever they wanted, and he could come in the cell, and I had no rights. I took off my clothes, since it was quite clear that they would have torn them off if I hadn't. So I was standing there naked, with blood dripping on the floor because of my period. In order not to start crying, I started screaming and swearing at them. At one point I yelled, "Fuck off!" Two of them held me while the third put her face one half inch from mine and said in a deadly voice, "Say it again!" I didn't but was shaking with rage. They told me to run my hands through my hair, and I refused. They yanked their hands through my hair. Then they told me to face the wall, touch my toes and squat. I complied, having a pretty good idea what would happen if I refused. They didn't search my clothing, making it all the more clear that this was not a search at all, but an exercise in humiliation and low-intensity torture." from "My Summer Vacation in Canada" by Anonymous (a self-published pamphlet).

"To the militants, I would like them to consider the following:

That when good papers like Ecomedia print trash like their 'This time we Retaliate' issue, which condemned the non-violent arrests that took place [in an ANVA-organized demonstration protesting the US downing of the Iranian airbus] before the fight [anarchist demo held later the same day] as 'futile', they are being ahistorical and sectarian in the extreme. If ritual civil disobedience, which is far more open to non-white, non-young, non-male and non-middle class protestors is futile, does that imply that beating on cops was more productive? Many militants would do well to remember that they first got their political feet through such 'futile' actions and this process of radicalization is not unique to them.

Most people have been paralyzed by the fear of breaking the bosses' laws, and are unable to rationally consider the pros and cons of undertaking actions that lack the bosses' stamp of legal approval. Organizations like the *Alliance for Non-Violent Action* (ANVA) provide a de facto means to break down the fear of authority in the hearts of those who are being arrested, however ritually, solely on the basis of their political beliefs.

This does not mean that this specifically pacifist approach is merely a way-station without its own dignity on the inevitable path to the *True Faith* of militancy. Nor does it mean that such actions are those of wishy-washy "liberals". ANVA's Deb Ellis and Ken Hancock have as radical an analysis as you'll likely find, as is the case with our Fellow Workers from the *Catholic Worker* movement; these people continually put their asses on the line while armchair radicals talk, talk, talk.

These radical pacifists have often shown more solidarity for militants than they get in return. Perhaps this is because they have made an effort to perceive reality in all of its shades, rather than the archetypal world of many militants; where humans in uniforms are no longer human beings but are an evil to be destroyed....

Liberals are the warm water in which radicals swim. Radicals can heat up the water, whose warmth spreads out to involve more people in luke-warm liberal movements while former liberals join the fast boil of the radicals. The two factions are joined at the hip in a perpetual love-hate relationship best articulated as "familiarity breeds contempt."

The process is simply the way human society operates. Always has. Always will. But what constitutes liberal opinion today is the work of radicals 20 years earlier and what we rant and freak about today (in our radical isolation), will work its way into the political environment of the future.

And just to make sure I don't forget anyone, I would like to address any pacifists out there who are moved to disassociate themselves from resistance such as we saw on July 4.

When those anarchists witnessed mounted police charging and beating their comrades, including men and women lacking even shirts to protect them from the blows, they experienced a very elemental desire to show solidarity. It is this solidarity in the face of overwhelming adversity that we must celebrate and encourage.

If you think that their solidarity could be more effectively expressed in a similar situation, then by all means promote these methods. It is my belief that non-violent tactics are applicable in 99% of confrontations; it is that 1% over which I want to quibble.

Gandhi's millions of pacifists did not drive the British Raj out of India in a vacuum. The British were in an unrelenting battle with armed resistance whose exhausting fight allowed British control of only the towns and cities. These militants raised the cost of occupation and inspired more spirited resistance which was organized into a

## Gay and Straight Grief: The Differences

A comparison of traditional heterosexual grief in response to the loss of a loved one with nontraditional Gay grief in response to the loss of a lover to AIDS appears below (adapted from "Gay Grief: An Examination of Its Uniqueness Brought to Light by the AIDS Crisis," by Sandra Jacoby Klein and William Fletcher, *Journal of Psychological Oncology*, Vol. 4(3), Fall, 1986, pp. 21-24):

### Traditional (Straight) Grief

The majority of the bereaved are womyn aged 50 or older.

The bereaved encompass a cross-section of society and are sometimes shunned because they are reminders of death.

Low self-esteem and guilt are common.

The bereaved are likely to have a network of family, friends, and children to lend support during the mourning period.

When their spouse dies, many older widows and widowers are confronted with the reality of their own deaths sometime in the future. Issues such as "Who will be there for me?" increase in importance.

The role of widow or widower is well-defined in society. They have an identity and a title, and their bereavement is a clearly understood time of distress.

Traditional male/female roles have been assigned in the relationship, and the survivor must assume unfamiliar role obligations.

The institution of marriage has certain guarantees for survivors' financial security, such as Social Security and other benefits to the next-of-kin.

Anticipatory grief can be eased during periods of hospitalization because spouses are welcomed at the bedside. Displays of affection are accepted and supported by the hospital staff.

It is assumed that survivors will be in charge of funeral services and burial arrangements.

Discussions about sexuality are infrequent.

The deceased is idealized, and faults are forgotten or overlooked.

Widows often find work to be therapeutic, whereas widowers often do not because they "have no one to work for now" in their traditional role as breadwinner.

Attachment to another member in a bereavement group sometimes occurs but is not usually intense.

Reentry and resocialization are difficult but acceptable goals after a suitable period of time.

Many outside resources provide support during grief: clergy, physicians, private agencies, and therapists. Usually, someone who has had grief-work experience can be found.

This comparison supports the assumption that the traditional heterosexual group can rely more on a built-in societal support system. The lack of this system in the male homosexual community gives rise to many unique issues and creates a need for specialized interventions.

### Nontraditional (Gay) Grief

The majority of the bereaved are men, frequently younger than 45.

The bereaved come from a subculture with a lifestyle that is often condemned by society, and they are also likely to be shunned as possible carriers of the AIDS virus.

Low self-esteem and guilt are often exacerbated by introjected homophobic attitudes.

The deceased is often the survivor's only real "family." His family may be distant emotionally and geographically. Even if they are sympathetic, their sexual orientation is different, and they may not understand the affectual bond that has been severed. The family and non-Gay friends of the deceased may resent and refuse to accept the survivor, causing a greater sense of abandonment and isolation.

For the older Gay bereaved, the future is more uncertain. Lacking a family and doubting the possibility of another long-term relationship, a lonely death seems the likely reality to be reckoned with.

No societal approval exists for Gay relationships, and no tradition exists for Gay mourning. No descriptive title identifies the mourner, who may not have "come out" and may be unable to express feelings in the workplace. People may question intense feelings for "just a friend."

Less role playing occurs in Gay relationships. Gay men are accustomed to living independently and managing diverse roles. If death exposes homosexuality, the survivor must deal with the additional loss of the "straight" role.

Financial benefits are not usually guaranteed to survivors. In addition, the lack of formal legal arrangements may result in loss of jointly acquired property.

Partners are often barred from intensive care units and are made to feel unwelcome in the hospital. Displays of affection arouse hostility among hospital staff and other patients.

Surviving partners are often excluded from funeral plans. The deceased are sometimes buried as "straight" with no acknowledgement of their ties to Gay life.

Discussions about sexuality are frequent and centre on sexual frustrations and fears of resuming sex because of the AIDS scare.

The deceased is frequently overidealized.

Some of the bereaved become apathetic about work. A few change jobs or take leaves of absence before and after the death.

Opportunities for attachment in a Gay bereavement group carry different weight because of same-sex orientation. Feelings for the deceased may be transferred to another group member.

Reentry and resocialization are difficult and, in addition, complicated by the AIDS crisis. Survivors need to reevaluate their social conduct for fear of transmitting the AIDS virus.

The few outside resources that exist for Gays are usually found only in large cities. These sources of support do not necessarily have experience with Gay grief.

deeply spiritual belief in massive non-violent civil disobedience.

Likewise, Martin Luther King didn't just come out of the blue. Blacks were fighting back. Riots were happening. The concessions won from white society were gained in the face of mounting fear over still greater violence on the part of blacks. Better go with this "moderate" voice, thought the whites. Yet, ten years earlier such "moderation" was viewed as the most dangerous form of extremism. It wasn't until an even more extreme element was introduced that the whites realized they were passing up a good deal and

grudgingly made room for MLK and his associates.

The radicals, of course, saw sell-out "Uncle Toms" everywhere, as we always do when we don't get what is obviously (to us) the only just way. But the parameters of debate were greatly widened as a consensus was reached between what Whitey was willing to lose versus the lengths to which the bulk of the resistance would go." from *One Big Union Newsletter* (July 1988) of the Toronto Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World IWW, 26A Oxford St., Toronto, Ontario M5T 1N9. □

# Out on the Roof

by Gordon Ekelund

It is 3:00 a.m., and the relentless mid-summer sun has beaten a temporary retreat. Still, stray evening breezes offer little respite for the denizens sweating out the night in the low rent walk-up John Waters calls home. While his neighbors doze fitfully, jerking and twitching through lino-tinted dreams in their dutch oven flats, John sits wide awake in a wad of clammy-sheets, roused from his beery slumber by a rich sulphuric tang in the air that burns his nostrils like a premonition. A colicky baby is wailing in its crib down the hall. Outside in the alley, a stray tomcat meows a forlorn invitation into the deaf darkness.

When a bolt of lightning arcs across his bedroom and surges out into the waiting night, John is prepared. He flings himself at the crackling chariot, connects, and hangs on for the ride of his life. It is just as the Voices promised.

Deliverance.

An overwhelming flush of self-affirmation courses through John as the splendor of creation unfurls before his eyes at the speed of light. This is no voyage of discovery. The Milky Way holds no suspense for the intergalactic voyageur. Nor does the Horseshoe Nebula, or the solitary serenity of blue Polaris. John has always sensed that Orion's belt holds the key to unravelling the mysteries of space and time. Now, as his bolt caroms along the coordinates laid down by these three flickering signposts into the heart of eternity -- and beyond -- his theories are spectacularly confirmed. The linear majesty of infinity is revealed.

There is Life beyond the Red Limit. As John approaches the end of the line, his flesh is seared, purged by an all-encompassing wash of pure light, pure love. His corneas melt; vitreous humor splashes wet and warm down his cheeks. And for the first time in his life, John can truly see.

When his bolt of lightning shudders to a halt outside a pair of wrought gold gates straining to kiss the dome of the sky, John sees that he has been expected. A solitary being stands waiting for him at the foot of the towering portals. No bearded old fool with an oversized ledger teetering in his shrivelled arms as myth commonly holds, the Gatekeeper stands patiently, unencumbered and erect, a strapping Adonis who beckons John to his side with a tractor beam of love.

No words are uttered at the gates. None are necessary. The Sentinel's steady gaze assures John that it is not his time -- not yet. But with this promise comes a solemn charge. "Few are chosen," the beams of love radiate, "And even fewer are worthy of this precious gift." John understands.

He steps back, redeemed.

With this silent admonition, the audience concludes. John does not protest when he is led back to the bolt. He stifles his disappointment when he is careened back to Brookton, and deposited into a strange bed. He allows himself to be manhandled, is tolerant of the icy hands that pinion him to a comfortless pallet. Restraining straps cannot manacle a state of grace. John does not cry out when a spike pierces his left arm. He passively resists the waves of numbing terror that envelop him as the poison pumped into his bloodstream slowly, insidiously, buries him alive.

John regains consciousness in a small white room. The cell is bare, save for a pathetic pagan icon sagging on crossed sticks on the wall opposite his pallet. He recognizes the grimace furrowing the



icon's blood greased brow; this is St. Francis Hospital. John has learned to appreciate the bland sameness of hospital rooms. There is a security inherent in tyranny, an oasis of freedom from thought in enforced regimens. He knows that many parolees develop insomnia waiting for the reassuring steel on steel clank of Lights Out.

Of course John Waters is no common criminal. He knows that he is a prisoner of conscience, a victim of the envy of lesser men. Lying calmly in the restraining straps that pin him to his pallet, he wonders how long he has been in confinement, how much more harassment he will be asked to endure to prove himself worthy. His ears ring with a residual tranquilizer hum.

Obviously, his gaolers intend to destroy all memories of his voyage with a narcotic blotter, and reduce him to their truly pitiable level. But they have failed before, will fail again.

John's meditations are interrupted when Dr. Swanson barges into the cell. The doctor, a swarthy imp of a man who stands a snicker over 5' tall in his rubber soled sneak shoes, has been a tenacious adversary over the past five years. He unstraps his captive, and as John flexes his numb arms, the doctor mumbles a hypocritical

## There is SECURITY inherent in tyranny

apology through his paste-on moustache. "It is standard policy here at St. Francis to restrain all patients who have been admitted by the police in a disoriented state -- for their own protection," he says.

And just who dictates standard policy, John wonders. Who gives the police this mandate? He yearns to trap the doctor in his own web of deceit, but past experience stays his tongue. There are many victories gained by silence. John cannot begin to enumerate the falsehoods and choreographed confrontations that have been entered in his caselog over the years. If Dr. Swanson feels compelled to invent a history for him, so be it.

The Dark One can be very transparent.

Days lag in the sterile confines of Ward 6. Therapy sessions -- one-on-one standoffs with Dr. Swanson in the mornings, and interminable group encounters in the

Bertha, the architect of this homecoming scheme, is never daunted.

Either she has a short, selective memory; or she is a glutton for punishment, John surmises. He did take his parents up on their offer once. The experiment culminated in a screaming match with Ed that was violent enough to get John dispatched to the provincial mental hospital, where he languished six months. Maximum security.

Two weeks after the quarantine has been lifted, John is paid a visit by his friend Ralph. Ralph drops off a copy of Time magazine and a carton of smokes, then plops down in a chair at the foot of John's bed. Small talk chokes in his throat; he appears to be suffocating in the cell's antiseptic stench. When 10 minutes of this agonizing showdown have ticked away, and Ralph begins to eye the door, John suggests that they escape to the Day Room for coffee and a cigarette. Glancing at his watch, Ralph agrees.

Ralph is unable to suppress a grimace when John introduces him to the fellow prisoners they find in the Day Room. Mrs. Hydeson, a thin bead of spit oozing from her lower lip as she rocks, catatonic, in her wheel chair, staring through a soap opera on the television set that blares non-stop from 9:00 am to Lights Out. Jock and wild eyed Woody, arguing aimlessly as they shuffle the dead afternoon hours away over a cribbage board. Ralph is unimpressed by his friend's encyclopedic knowledge of each case history. Unmoved by John's accounts of group sessions where he has been able to shepherd these lost souls from the very lip of the Abyss, Ralph sips at his coffee stiffly, draws long and hard on his smoke.

Before they can get settled in, a nurse makes a blitzkrieg incursion into the Day Room. Patronizing her charges as only a nurse can, she jams a thermometer between Mrs. Hydeson's clenched teeth, and breaks up the crib game in the corner. When she moves menacingly in John's direction, he repels her with a sneer and a sharp curse. Ralph flinches at the outburst, as if somehow John is in the wrong, and not the harridan. Very odd. Hastily butting out his half finished cigarette, Ralph flees the ward.

Abandoned in the Day Room, John reflects on his friend's flight, Ralph's irritability and obvious discomfort. It slowly becomes clear to him that, in spite of a carefully orchestrated charade to prove otherwise, Ralph is in deep emotional trouble. John curses the petty egocentricity that has shielded his eyes from his friend's silent plea for help. There can be no other reason for Ralph's irrational revulsion and fear: many nurses and ward aides suffer from a similar malaise, unable to reconcile



the personal weaknesses they see mirrored through the eyes of their charges. Of course, as far as John is concerned, the nurses can go to hell -- and will. But Ralph matters. John vows to help him find the light.

He spends many hard hours alone in his cell, mixing mortar to pave the road to his friend's salvation. When he is granted day pass privileges, one full month after his date of incarceration, John seizes the opportunity to put his plans into action.

But before John calls on Ralph at his apartment, he engages in a simple act of self-preservation. Dr. Swanson, in many respects, is more of a pharmacist than a clinician. John's treatment schedule relies heavily on a daily battery of sense numbing injections. As soon as he signs out, John detours to the Longhorn Tavern. Experience has taught him that a brace of rapidly guzzled beers will effectively defuse the narcotics pumped into his veins. The process can have side effects, alcohol being the great leveler it is, but John is willing to gamble on occasional lapses in coordination to disperse the pinpoint paralysis inflicted by his medication.

Ralph is surprised, and does not look entirely pleased, when he sees John standing on his doorstep. He is still obviously shaken by his exposure to the ward, so John takes charge, inviting himself in for a coffee. The visit has interrupted Ralph's supper preparations. He returns to his potato peeler as John launches into one of the anecdotes that he has painstakingly composed for this house call.

"You know, I went camping once with a couple of buddies. We were looped every day, and one of the guys had some real killer hash." Ralph's interest is not piqued by this introduction, but John continues, talking into his friend's back.

"Well one day I got zipped, and decided to go exploring on my own. I was out of it so badly that I didn't even know what direction I'd started out in, and before long I was lost. I was still stumbling around when night fell, and I didn't have any food. I was freaked out, and kept walking, but I didn't know what direction I'd started out in. Well, I walked all night. There were bear droppings all over the place. Have you ever seen bear droppings, man?"

Ralph shrugs over the kitchen sink, and says, "No."

"Well, it's scary. The second day went as same as the first. I was getting dehydrated, and was totally disoriented. I didn't know what direction I'd started in. That night, I tried to sleep, but nearly froze

unable to reconcile the ...weakness they see mirrored Through the eyEs of their charges

to death, so I had to keep moving. The morning of the third day, I saw a hunter, but I was so crazy by then that I ran in the opposite direction when I saw him come crashing through the underbrush. I didn't know what direction I'd started in." John slumps back, exhausted by the telling of his tale.

Ralph turns to face him, and appears strangely annoyed as he asks, "So what happened?"

"I came across the hunter's camp later that afternoon. He had some smokes on his table, and I had one. He came back that night and drove me to the hospital. God, I just didn't know what direction I'd started in."

"That's generally how you get lost," Ralph says, turning back to his sink full of spuds.

"Of course," John claps his hands in triumph. "Don't you see?"

Ralph says over his shoulder, "All I really see is the mess you've made."

In his excitement, John has splashed coffee over the side of his mug. The table is sloppy, and his shirt is wet, but that doesn't matter; he is too close to a breakthrough to back away now. He says, "No, the point is that everybody gets lost from time to time. And sometimes they can run away from the people who can help them the most."

"So what?"

"So, I think you should come sit in on one of our group therapy sessions. It might be interesting."

Ralph yelps, and jumps away from the sink. Blood is flowing freely from his right hand. "Damn paring knife," he curses, and turns to John, "Look man, that sounds like something less than a borderline thrill. You've got to excuse me." Before John can protest, he is shuffled out the door.

The image of Ralph at the door -- blood from his fresh wound adding yet another stain to his almost terminally bespattered cotton drill pants -- haunts John for the rest of the evening. The Dark One can certainly be devious: those who have the least to

of her only child. These are people whom John can help. He is often more positive than the group leader, and his comrades let him know it. At the same time, John is keenly aware that a shepherd's worth is not measured by the 99 fatted sheep grazing in the meadow, but by the one lamb stranded in the crags.

And one evening in the Longhorn, while John is debating muddy strategies with himself over a stale draft beer, his spine is stiffened by a faint Voice. The Voice whispers, "Perhaps you are not worthy after all."

Weeks pass, and John has still made no progress -- Ralph is backpedaling full tilt to disaster, and he can do nothing to halt the slide. This sense of futility spills over into his group therapy sessions. He is distant, preoccupied in group, and finds himself snapping at those who ask his advice over post-session coffee before he can check himself. Some mornings it takes too much effort to make the seven block hike to the hospital.

The small Voice in the night has grown bolder. Other Voices have joined the dis-



lose and the most to gain, are invariably the sad souls most adamantly opposed to change. Experience has taught John this bitter lesson. There was a time in his life when the Voices rang shrill and hollow with deceit. Unemployed and lacking a focus as he is, poor Ralph is literally playing with fire.

John makes follow-up visits almost daily, but Ralph remains unalterably opposed to reform. This failure stings, especially in the light of John's breakthroughs on other fronts. Dr. Swanson scolds him for imbibing; the nurses pucker their gaudily painted lips into pouts, and threaten him with an extension of his sentence if he does not toe the line. Every lecture is an admission of defeat. John knows that doers do not scold. He has triumphed over his captors.

His vision remains intact.

Dr. Swanson finally formalizes his victory with a signature, and John is released from St. Francis after two months of incarceration. He adheres to the terms of his parole to the letter. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning John checks in with his group therapy leader at the hospital for out-patient sessions, and twice a week he submits himself to the proddings of a Mental Health counsellor from social services. The counsellor continues to administer psychiatric dope, but John has long since vaulted that chemical hurdle.

He actually finds group therapy invigorating. His mates in these sessions are, in the main, normal men and women who have been dealt a disorienting blow by life. Some have been unable to cope with a marital breakdown; one woman in the group cannot come to terms with the death

senter, and John is forced to pound back more beer than is safe to silence his Critics. Still, They persist.

One evening, after a particularly harrowing afternoon at the Longhorn, Bertha Waters pays an unexpected call on John at his flat, ostensibly to drop off a carrot cake. She does not have much to say, and stays just long enough to sniff around the corners and crannies before excusing herself to join her friends at the bingo hall down the block.

The nervous twitch of Bertha's nose at the door is a sure tip-off. John has grown accustomed to the routine over the years. He drags himself out of bed before noon the next day, and sets to work on his apartment, clearing the litter of half empty bean cans and bottles from the kitchen counter, attacking the pile of dishes that has begun to sprout in the sink. Scant moments after he has rinsed the remains of a three day growth of beard down the bathroom sink, John hears a sharp rap on the door.

He ushers his social worker in with little ceremony. John's social worker is not as discreet as Bertha in her tour of inspection. A professionally dour veteran in her early fifties, Mrs. Watson makes a perfunctory, thorough, sweep across the flat. When she excuses herself to use the washroom, John hears her rattling through the contents of his medicine cabinet. The plump hen roosts herself on his sofa and flips open a notebook when she is satisfied that she has seen all there is to see.

Mrs. Watson is a person who prides herself on her candor, and John plays along with her. He answers her questions succinctly, but volunteers no information; and she does not press beyond the bounds of a routine interrogation. The game is easy:

John knows that his social worker has neither the time nor the inclination to stay longer than absolutely necessary, that she is only making the home visit to follow up on Bertha's call and keep her office files tidy. Stimulus: response. Maze politics.

Still, when the social worker snaps her briefcase shut, and barges out the door as brusquely as she entered, John is badly drained. He is still one step ahead of his tormentors, but can feel the lead slipping. And it is all because he has been sloppy, ineffectual. John knows that he has brought this trouble down on himself. He wonders, as he trudges to the Longhorn, if the Voices have been right all along.

John does not much feel like a drink, and is slightly nauseated by the pickled tavern stench that greets him when he pushes through the Longhorn's double doors. But it is too late to turn back. And though he nearly gags on his first beer of the day, he cannot pry himself away from the table.

There is too much to consider, too much room for remorse in the sparsely populated barn of a bar. Other regulars nod and say hello as they drift past John's post, but he does not return their perfunctory greetings, does not offer a chair as he normally would. He cannot afford external, additional distractions.

Afternoon sags into early evening, and still no clear strategies emerge out of the tangle of lost thoughts and stinging accusations that rob the punch from his draft beer. As John looks up from an empty glass to summon his waitress for another round, he catches a glimpse of a shadow, loitering in the twilight slurred recesses of the tavern. Struggling to control a chill of panic, John changes his order. He bolts back the straight-up double shot of rye delivered to his table; and heads for the door, afraid to look back.

The streets are quiet. Rush hour has passed, and it is not yet time for Brookton's late-model night riders to commence their monotonous patrols. Stars have begun to



emerge in the sooty twilight sky. Every twitching pinprick of light is an accusation. Though he has no clear plan of action, John knows where he must go.

He has long since stopped visiting Ralph on a daily basis, but his friend has begun to make him feel that even his once a week housecalls are an imposition. Ralph glowers as he ushers John into his flat. A khaki work shirt at least a week ripe spills over the waistband of his pants, the same pair of pants he was wearing when John paid his first call, by the look of them.

Ralph hardly bothers with a hello as he sprawls across the length of his couch. John pulls up a broken deck chair, and sits quietly through the episode of *Three's Company* absorbing his friend's complete attention. Words tumble over words in his mind as spectres float across the screen. But John cannot coax the warm compassion in his heart out over his frozen tongue, and can only beam helplessly at his friend. Ralph pointedly keeps his eyes glued to the tube, unwilling -- or unable -- to comprehend.

Ralph's television set, a black and white relic, is on its last legs. From time to time the picture breaks up, and begins to roll as furiously as John's thoughts. Struck by this allusion, John cannot restrain a laugh. Ralph pierces him with a killing glare, and he wants to explain.

But he cannot. Embarrassed, he wants to stop cackling, but cannot. He cannot gasp a protest when Ralph pitches him roughly out into the hall.

John regains a modicum of composure in the corridor. Some low rent anarchist has smashed the hall light, and a dim, deathly still permeates the entire floor. The night is lost, but John is afraid to go home, too aware of what awaits him there. Hoping to salvage a part of himself from the evening's wreckage, he drops to his knees at Ralph's door, whispering a disheartened prayer.

John is awakened by a sharp kick in the ribs. Ralph towers over him, disgust ripe in his rabbit red eyes. "Have you been in the hall all night, you maniac? Are you trying to get me turfed out of here?"

### those who have the least to loose ... are most adamantly opposed to CHANGE

John cannot reply, and Ralph's tone makes it painfully clear that no reply is expected of him even if it was physically possible. Ralph hauls him to his feet and sighs. "You've been sick, I know, but this is just too much. You have to go. And don't come back."

Though Ralph has it all wrong, John cannot protest. He has fallen asleep on his vigil -- is worthless. He leaves Ralph's building, and wanders the streets. Passing St. Francis, where group session is just getting under way, John pauses for a moment, but decides to press on. He knows that he no longer has anything of value to contribute to the group.

Exhausted, he allows his feet to lead him to the promise of sanctuary. John is fidgeting on the Longhorn steps when the manager turns the lock and opens the tavern up for business. He cannot make eye contact with his waitress as he orders his first rye of the day. She has too much on



him already.

By mid-afternoon, his waitress has cut him off. Shucking aside her attempts to rouse him, and the cold stares of the other patrons, John chain smokes through the dead hours, bracing himself for the confrontation the night is sure to bring. When a liver spotted patron at an adjoining table shuffles off to the washroom, leaving his beer unattended, John reaches across and pilfers a swig. The manager is looming over his table before he can swallow.

Caught in the act, John offers little protest when he is escorted out the door, and roughly deposited into the back seat of a cab. "This is your free one, buddy, your last free ride," the manager tells John. He turns to the cabby and says, "Take him where he wants to go."

John flinches as the manager slams the cab door. Several moments pass before he realizes that something is expected from him. Suffocating in his back seat cell, he tries to speak, but has to keep his teeth

clenched to choke back a wave of nausea.

"I don't have all day, pal," the hack barks, "And I just cleaned these seats, so watch your ass." John swallows hard, and begins to obediently mumble his address, but checks himself. He gives the cabby the only number that holds any promise of silencing the Voices.

It is unseasonably warm, Indian Summer. John is sweating profusely by the time he tackles the final flight of stairs to Ralph's apartment. He raps tentatively at the door, and shudders as he feels himself being probed through the peephole. A voice from the other side matter of factly dismisses him with a curt "Get out of here. I warned you."

But John does not budge -- it is too late to back down. Pipelining love from the very depths of his soul into the unblinking

contempt on the far side of the peephole, he taps on the door again. No reply.

The Voices began a clamor. "Run," some counsel. Others howl, "Turncoat!" and take up a shrill chant. With a Herculean effort, John raises his arm for one final assault on the particle board bastion that stands between him and deliverance.

The door swings open before he can strike. John breaks into a broad grin: all is forgiven. The smile is smashed from his face by a crushing uppercut. He collapses, stunned, against the hall wall. His watering eyes see the door to his salvation slammed shut in his face.

Hounded by his Companions every step of the way, John limps into the night, back to his apartment building. He ignores the gang of street kids who join his one man parade for a block. Still groggy, he stumbles as he negotiates the treacherous stairs leading to his flat, and gashes a cheek on the handrail. By the time he has managed to stickhandle his key into the lock, his sweater is stained.

Eschewing the wash basin, John tumbles fully clothed into bed. Sleep will not come to him. His wound refuses to staunch itself, and the pillows are soon greasy with wasted life. If only blood could silence the Voices.

Unable to endure their shrieking, John throws himself out of his sheets. He scrambles out of the flat, slamming one of his shins on a shadow obscured end table in his rush to escape. He begins to descend the stairs, but stops, realizing that he has no place to go, and reverses his course, plodding upward, to the roof. The rotting fire escape door is jammed, swollen shut. John heaves a shoulder into it drunkenly, and the worm-eaten wood flies away.

The crisp autumn air clears his lungs. It cannot salve his conscience. Siding with his tireless Critics, the full harvest moon leers down on him. John looks away, scanning the night sky hungrily for his mentor, Orion. He espies the Hunter stalking the Southern horizon, and John's eyes latch on to His broad belt like drowning men. But Orion offers little solace. The three bold guideposts force John's vision to extend beyond the horizon -- into an all-consuming darkness, and a death with no waking.

His legs begin to weaken under him, but John furiously resists the weight of his mortality. He grunts heavily, like a bull calf kissed by the hammer, when gravity finally drags him down. Flat on his back in a bed of gravel and tar, he keeps his eyes buried in the heart of the night. Fixing his gaze on those three twitching sentinels, he prays, open-eyed and desperate, waiting for a sign. □

Illustration: S. Nash

## The Changing Family



Catherine O'Neill

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San Francisco, California 94113.

To get in contact with the burgeoning Green, social ecology and bioregional movement in Latin (Indian) America, write to: *Promundo Internacional*, Casilla 60, Sucursal 14, Buenos Aires 1414, Argentina.

Must reading is the weekly newspaper, *Gay Community News*, which covers all aspects of lesbian and gay liberation. Individual copies are \$1.00; a year's subscription is \$33.00 (U.S.). Outside the U.S., add 50%. Write to: GCN Subscriptions, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116.

The *Network Against Psychiatric Assault* would like to let people know about the following resources: *Dr. Caligari's Psychiatric Drugs*. 3rd edition, copyright June 1987. One of the few unbiased sources of information about the extremely harmful effects of psychiatric drugs, including information on neuroleptics, lithium, anti-depressants, minor tranquilizers, etc. Also info. on in-



formed consent, overdosing, drug withdrawal, and general precautions. All-new section updating for each drug category. Written by an M.D. \$6.00 each (U.S.) postpaid, or \$4.00 each for orders of 5 or more. Payable to: *NAPA*.

**Madness Network News.** From 1972 to 1986, the MNN collective published this quarterly journal of the psychiatric inmates' liberation movement. Contains articles about ex-inmate organizing, the history of psychiatric atrocities, first person accounts, and poetry, songs, drawings, film and book reviews, by and about mad people. \$1.25 each. (Write for a list of available issues.) Also available: **Madness Network News Reader.** A large and beautifully illustrated collection of articles and poetry from the early days of the movement. Copyright 1974. \$7.00 (U.S.) each. Payable to: *MNN*.

Copies of the first-ever *Directory of Canadian Pagan Resources* are now available for \$3.00. Send cheque or money order to: *Pagans for Peace*, P.O. Box 6531, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X4.

*Survival International's* regular news bulletin continues to feature incredible information. In issue #20 (1988), they report a conversation with Datuk Amar James Wong, the State Minister for En-

vironment and Tourism in Sarawak, Malaysia. It has been revealed that Wong's own company, Limbang Trading, sells timber on the protected species list drawn up by the *Select Committee on Flora and Fauna* which he himself chairs. Mr. Wong laughed off the climatic implications of forest loss by saying, "We get too much rain in Sarawak, it stops me playing golf." The Malaysian government's line on Native people is: "We don't want them running around like

## GREEN LETTER

Vol. 4 No. 3



animals.... Shouldn't they be taught to be hygienic like us and eat clean food..?"

The Newsletter also mentions a photographically illustrated history of the Navajos' battle against U.S. government encroachment. It is called "Cry. Sacred Ground; Big Mountain USA," and is available for \$15.00 (U.S.) from the: *Christic Institute*, 1324 North Capitol Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20002. Memberships in *Survival International* are available for \$20.00 U.S. (or 8 pounds U.K.) from: SI, 310 Edgware Rd., London W2 1DY, England.

**World Rainforest Report** is available from: *Rainforest Action Network*, 300 Broadway (#28), San Francisco, California 94133. Send a donation of \$10.00 or more to get on their mailing list. Both it and *Survival International* are good sources of information on the continuing massacres of Indians and the murder and harassment of rubber tappers in South American rainforests.

The *North Shore Environmental Web* is conducting a vigorous campaign against herbicide spraying in Nova Scotia's forests. The Web is also active in monitoring seal kills off Nova Scotia's shoreline. For more information, write to: NSEW, P.O. Box 101, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, B2H 5E1.

The *Ontario Environmental Network* has produced an **Environmental Resource Book** which lists Ontario's 306 active environmental organizations, and the hundreds of up-to-date printed and audio-visual materials available from these groups. Individuals and non-profit groups, send \$6.00 plus 10% shipping and handling to: OEN, P.O. Box 125, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2Z7.

Both New Englanders, whose governments plan to buy power from Quebec, and Quebec Cree, are opposing Premier Bourassa's proposed expansion of the James Bay Project, a massive system of

hydroelectric dams which have wreaked ecological and cultural havoc in areas of northern Quebec. To get more information, write to: Jim Higgins, Pleasant Valley, RD1, Box 730, Cambridge, Vermont 05444, or Diane Reid, Grand Council of the Cree, Suite 3438, 1 Place Ville Marie, Montreal, Quebec H3B 3M6.

The *International Uranium Congress* was recently held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, June 16-21 to strengthen the worldwide movement against uranium mining and refining. Proceedings are available for \$25.00 (Canadian cheques only). For a copy of the proceedings or for more information, write to: IUC, 2138 McIntyre Street, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 2R7.

**Akwesasne Notes** is back after their disastrous fire. Subscriptions are \$15.00 (U.S.) per year or \$2.00 per copy. Send money to: AN, Mohawk Nation, P.O. Box 196, Rooseveltown, New York 13683-0196.

The *Viola White Water Foundation* was founded in 1977 by Jimmy Little Turtle to see that funds earmarked for Native Americans got where they were needed. The Foundation publishes a newsletter and accepts tax deductible donations from U.S. residents (donations from Canada and overseas are not tax-deductible). Send money to: The Viola White Water Foundation, 4225 Concord St. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17109.

Request: "29 year old Anark needs your help. Incarcerated since age 18 -- currently serving time for crime did not commit. Has no legal assistance from attorneys, nor the support of family and friends. Needs letters of encouragement,



and donations for legal fund. Write to: M.J. Stotts, No. 17829-034, Box 34550 M-U, Memphis, Tennessee 38184-0550. Donations to: Michael J. Stotts, c/o P.O. Box 4167, Halfmoon, New York 12065."

A prisoner recently wrote to us seeking help. He is: Henry Zimmerman (#106929), P.O. Box 37, Holman Prison, Atmore, Alabama 36503. He is being hassled by prison authorities for his activities of resistance inside, has been segregated, and fears for his life. He desperately needs support and contact with the outside. Write to him at the above address. □

## letters



### Critical Support

Greetings of Peace,

The so-called "rift in the environmental movement" is simply another example of a world which lacks any coherent social theory, and where the existing social organizations established on selfish, poorly thought out premises are the problem, rather than overpopulation. I was at the July '87 *Earth First!* rendezvous, and witnessed the heated discussion between *Alien Nation* and Ed Abbey. As a longtime participant in the collective movement on the West Coast, I could easily appreciate the need for *Earth First!* to learn more about general anarchist history, worker organizing, and worldwide self-management efforts. As an environmental organizer, I could also see *Alien Nation's* need to develop savvy and tact. Their attention-getting confrontation with cultural chauvinist to the bitter end, author Ed Abbey, did not add much to the quality of the gathering. As I explained to *Alien Nation* at the time, it was good to see them and the literature they brought. I urged them to do a workshop dealing with all the criticisms which eventually were published by *Fifth Estate* as "How Deep is Deep Ecology?" Instead, they hosted an anarchist green potluck which was well attended. The workshop, dialogue, and potentially exciting educational opportunity did not happen, to my regret and to the regret of many others I've spoken with. This is not the fault of any *Earth First!* personality or the rendezvous committee. The fact that a real forum did not materialize is due entirely to the inept way that the Washington state anarchist group handled the situation.

The *Earth First!* journal comments by Miss Ann Thropy, and the statements critical of sanctuary for Central Americans, only show that there are persons within the diverse *EF!* movement who lack a proper understanding of anarchism. I agree with *Earth First!*'s critics that the movement needs to acknowledge some of the wisdom other complimentary movements have to offer. One main problem is a lack of a forum for the process to take place. I suggest that people who are serious about these matters be at the '89 rendezvous, and please contact the Rendezvous Committee at: POB 5871, Tucson AZ 85703 to schedule workshops. Advance notice will guarantee that this time something dynamic can take place without the misunderstanding and chaos. I look forward to being with people from Kick It Over, *Fifth Estate*, *Alien Nation*, the Vermont ecofeminist Murray Bookchin crowd, and anybody else who understands the importance of attending the '89 *Earth First!* Round River Rendezvous in New Mexico's Gila Wilderness next summer.

No Compromise in the Defense of Mother Earth,

Craig Stehr  
Quincy, MA

Dear KIO,

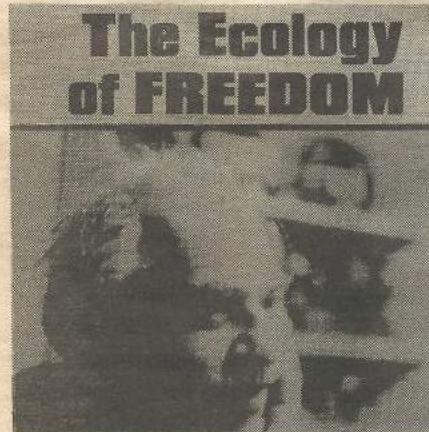
I wanted to respond to the ongoing social/deep ecology debate started in your pages. Aside from the articles from other sources you cited in your July 1988 issue, I would like to call your attention to some others.

First of all, "Ecocentrism and the Greens: Some Misunderstandings of Deep Ecology," by George Sessions, in the June 1988 issue of *The Trumpeter* (Canadian Ecophilosophy Network), to be continued in the fall issue. Sessions, co-author of *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*, does an excellent job of sorting out some of the hysteria being whipped up by Murray Bookchin and his associates. In the first installment of the article, Sessions points out that:

*Earth First! ... was originally patterned after Ed Abbey's novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975) and the movement has continued to cultivate a 'rednecks-for-wilderness' image.... Further, some of its members have made provocative misanthropic statements, which are not, and cannot be, part of the deep ecology philosophy.*

Secondly, I draw your attention to "The Deep Ecology/Eco-Feminism Debate and Its Parallels," by Tasmanian deep ecologist Warwick Fox, forthcoming, *Environmental Ethics* (University of Georgia, USA). At least in the early draft of this scholarly paper, Fox sounds a similar note: *Much of Bookchin's case for his mistaken contention that deep ecology is essentially a misanthropic enterprise rests on certain statements by one or two significant figures in Earth First! -- especially Dave Foreman.... While supporting ... the general aims of this organization, I have myself commented critically on particular aspects of its approach -- at least as this comes through the pages of its journal. Moreover, I, for one, am entirely happy to see Bookchin take on Dave Foreman's personal, unhistorical, and abhorrently simplistic views on population control.*

And lastly, "The Basis of Deep Ecology," by Arne Naess (the Norwegian



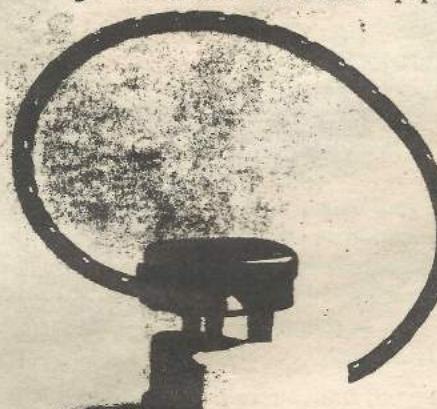
philosopher who first used the term), in *Resurgence* (UK), January/February 1988, which gives a fair and balanced view of deep ecology, rejecting both the extremes of the excessively divisive social ecology position, as well the dangers of the radical misanthropic wing of the environmental movement.

These references above ought to do much to clear up a lot of the muck being tossed around in the last year and a half, and all the fun being had by disparagers of deep ecology, who habitually use such ludicrous and mean-spirited epithets as "eco-fascist," "eco-Nazis," etc., to describe their opponents. I certainly have not detected any of this sort of rhetoric coming from the deep ecologists. (Even *Earth First!*, which most people know prides itself on its outrageous image, it seems to me on the whole has been very level-headed in fielding this sort of stuff.) And the three

## How Deep is Social Ecology

articles that I have cited here, in particular, certainly do not fit in well at all with the Bookchinite caricature of deep ecologists as "barely disguised racists, survivalists, macho Daniel Boones, outright social reactionaries" and on and on and on.

While I am on the subject of Murray Bookchin, since in any discussion of this controversy he figures heavily (some have even gone so far as to call him the "pope



of anarchy"), perhaps it would be worthwhile to go back a few years and see just exactly what Mr. Bookchin has been saying. Bookchin is quite enthusiastic about quoting others at their worst, and then using this "evidence" to discredit entire movements; well, perhaps it is time he had a dose of his own medicine.

For any understanding of Murray Bookchin's philosophy to be complete, a reading of his *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (1971) is essential. Many admirers of Bookchin as of late have focused primarily on his deceptively reasonable work, *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982) and largely ignored his earlier work. However, it seems to me that it is in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* that Bookchin's theories about how much human intervention into natural systems is appropriate really come to the fore.

I disagree with so much of what Bookchin bases his arguments on, not the least of which is the highly questionable notion that we are living in a "post-scarcity society," that it seems best to simply let him speak for himself:

*We of this century have finally opened the prospect of material abundance for all to enjoy -- a sufficiency in the means of life without the need for grinding, day-to-day toil. We have discovered resources, both for man and industry, that were totally unknown a generation ago. We have devised machines that automatically make machines. We have perfected devices that can execute onerous tasks more effectively than the strongest human muscles, that can surpass the industrial skills of the deftest human hands, that can calculate with greater rapidity and precision than the most gifted human minds. Supported by this qualitatively new technology, we can begin to provide food, shelter, garments, and a broad spectrum of luxuries.... In short, for the first time in history we stand on the threshold of a post-scarcity society.*

Read on. It gets even better:

*We could operate almost any machine, from a giant shovel in an open strip mine, to a grain harvester in the Great Plains either by cybernetic sensing devices or by remote control with television cameras. The effort needed to operate these devices and machines at a safe distance, in a comfortable quarters, would be minimal, assuming a human operator were required at all.*

And:

*This technological revolution, culminating in cybernetics, has created*

*the objective quantitative basis for a world without class rule, exploitation, toil or material want. The means now exist for the development of the rounded man, the total man, freed of guilt and the working of authoritarian modes of training and given over to desire and the sensuous apprehension of the marvelous.*

And for good measure, this passage from *Towards An Ecological Society* (1980):

*Fact: There are probably some six trillion barrels of oil in the ground today and even the most extravagant estimates of petroleum resources are proven historically to be underestimations.... Much the same is true of metals and minerals. Estimates of declining lead, zinc, bauxite, cobalt, manganese, chrome, and similar resources have flooded the press, but much of the data is specious at best and deliberately misleading at worst... many important mineral resources are increasing at an even faster rate than they are depleted...*

Every time I read over these passages, I am left in sort of a numb, incredulous state. As David Ehrenfeld alludes in his book, *The Arrogance of Humanism*, it is difficult to imagine an ad man for a giant chemical consortium waxing more eloquent in the service of "techno-fix" solutions to all of life's problems than Murray Bookchin does. What is perhaps most alarming is that many eco-feminists, anarchists and otherwise knowledgeable people who have aligned themselves behind the Bookchin banner seem to be largely unaware of these views. The highly centralized, totalitarian measures that inevitably accompany any large scale "cybernetized" technological intervention into the natural world have been fully documented in such brilliant works as Lewis Mumford's *The Myth of the Machine*, or Jerry Mander's *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, just to name a few. The very fact that we are having to go back to square zero to rehash this stuff now is further proof of just how far this debate has gotten us.

I would like to know specifically how ecological Bookchinites reconcile their desire for a less polluted, more natural world with Bookchin's vision of giant automated shovels operating in "open strip mines" (perhaps Murray himself would like to try his hand at this?), Orwellian machinery operated by television cameras and robots with "no human operator required" (gosh, what a relief, eh?), creating "a broad spectrum of luxuries" (just what every ecologically-based society needs) for a new race of Teilhardian Omega-men "freed from guilt... and given over to desire and the sensuous apprehension of the marvelous."

And of course there is no human population problem. Why? Because Murray tells us that petroleum, mineral and other resources are virtually inexhaustible in their dispersal (no need to worry about that second or third car, mom and dad); why, many important resources are "increasing at an ever faster rate than they are being depleted." And if by chance we do totally overrun and trash out this planet (which seems more and more likely every day), no need for alarm, there will undoubtedly be fully automated space stations standing by, staffed by cordial and efficacious robots prepared to whisk us away to their solar systems where we can summarily commence to do the same thing to them.

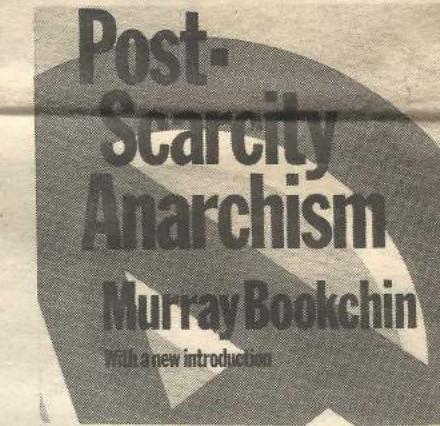
Sam Dolgoff, in his recent memoir *Fragments* (1986), questions whether Bookchin's thesis is really in the anarchist tradition at all, or would more accurately

be described as a garbled version of Marxism:

*Bookchin's view that the free society is unattainable without abundance, which in turn depends on advanced technology, rests on the economic determinant theories of Marx. But the deterioration of the labor and radical movements refute this theory. Abundance, far from promoting the Social Revolution, leads to the bourgeoisieification of the proletariat, making it the staunchest supporter of the status quo. Moreover, according to this theory, the backwards economy of underdeveloped regions will automatically exclude them from the revolutionary process. Considering the chronic poverty of two-thirds of the world's population, abundance, even under socialism, is unlikely in the foreseeable future.*

In retrospect, it is easy to understand why the deep ecologists have so evoked Bookchin's wrath, because they challenge so many of the basic assumptions that underlay his philosophy, some of which reads as if it could of come straight out of Herman Kahn and Julian Simon's *The Resourceful Earth* (the cornucopian theorists of the Reagan revolution). I have no basic quarrel with E.F. Schumacher's "appropriate technology," but it is difficult to see what is appropriate about leading people to believe that they can continue to expand their numbers and rate of consumption almost endlessly.

There is much more I would like to respond to in regards to the social/deep ecology split. However, I am aware that space is limited. As for the eco-feminist critique, Warwick Fox and George Sessions deal with it exhaustively in their forthcoming articles; therefore I will not



attempt to retrace that ground here.

My main concern at present is to expose some of the roots of Murray Bookchin's techno-fix neovo-anarchism, so that those progressives who have aligned themselves with this position can examine more clearly whether or not Mr. Bookchin's social ecology is in fact "the only position" dealing with the real issues of the day.

Bill McCormick  
Stehekin, WA

### Decentralizing Earth First!

Dear Kick It Over

Please send me a copy of *Kick It Over* containing the full Janet Biehl piece on "Deep Ecology". ....As a believer in the spiritual heart of resistance, I've alienated some of the "warrior clan", as a writer of pieces on freedom and anarchy I've alienated a lot of the power structure within the broader radical environmental movement.

Recent controversy has strengthened *Earth First!*ers resolve to decentralize and escalate our efforts, while helping socio-politico-anarchist models identify the value of biocentric/ sacred/ indigenous perspectives in our active resistance....

For the Earth,  
Lone Wolf Circles